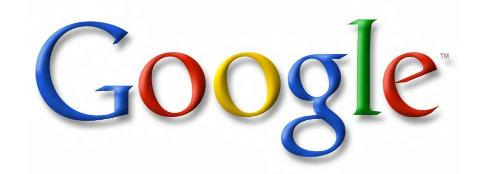
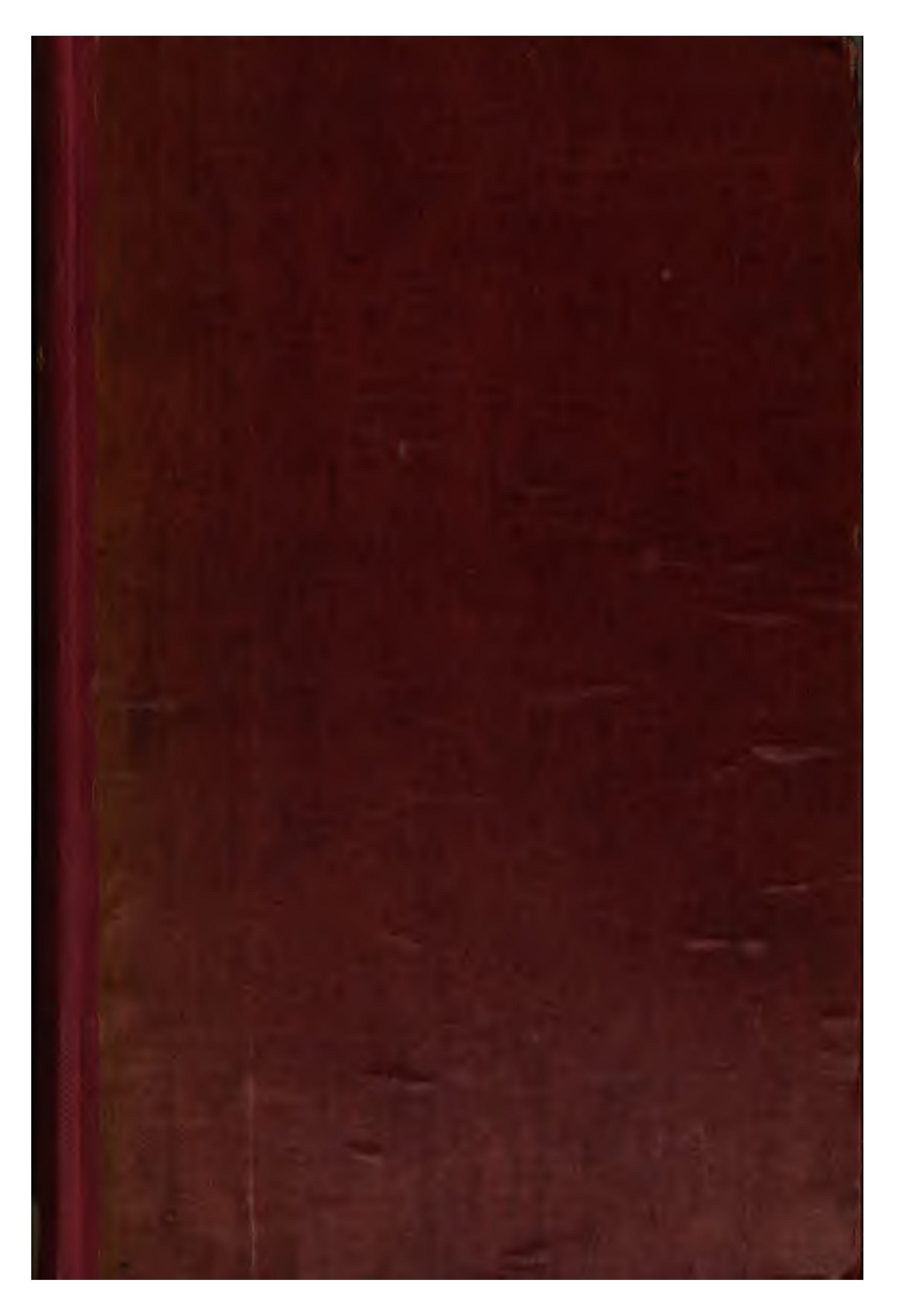
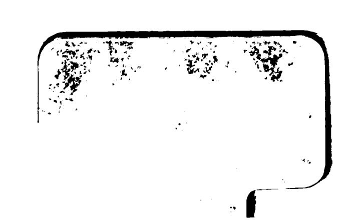





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SKETCHES

OF THE

HISTORY OF MAN.

BY THE HONOURABLE

HENRY HOME OF KAMES,

ONE OF THE SENATORS OF THE COLLEGE OF JUSTICE, AND ONE OF THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF JUSTICIARY IN SCOTLAND.

CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED
BY THE LAST ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS
OF THE AUTHOR.

A NEW EDITION, IN THREE VOLUMES.

TO WHICH IS NOW ADDED
A GENERAL INDEX.



VOL. III.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED FOR WILLIAM CREECH, EDINBURGH;
AND T. CADELL & W. DAVIES, LONDON.

1807.

NEILL & Co. Printers,
Edinburgh.

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BOOK III.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF ARISTOTLE'S LOGIC, WITH REMARKS.

INTRODUCTION.

IN reviewing the foregoing ſketch, it occurred, that a fair analyſis of Ariſtotle's logic, would be a valuable addition to the hiſtorical branch. A diſtinct and candid account of a ſyſtem that for many ages governed the reaſoning part of mankind, cannot but be acceptable to the public. Curioſity will be gratified, in ſeeing a phantom delineated that ſo long faſcinated the learned world; a phantom, which ſhows infinite genius, but like

the pyramids of Egypt or hanging gardens of Babylon, is abſolutely uſeleſs unleſs for raiſing wonder. Dr Reid, profeſſor of moral philoſophy in the College of Glaſgow, reliſhed the thought; and his friendſhip to me prevailed on him, after much ſolicitation, to undertake the laborious taſk. No man is better acquainted with Ariſtotle's writings; and, without any enthuſiaſtic attachment, he holds that philoſopher to be a firſt-rate genius.

The logic of Ariſtotle has been on the decline more than a century; and is at preſent relegated to ſchools and colleges. It has occaſionally been criticiſed by different writers; but this is the firſt attempt to draw it out of its obſcurity into daylight. From what follows, one will be enabled to paſs a true judgment on that work, and to determine whether it ought to make a branch of education. The Doctor's eſſay, as a capital article in the progreſs and hiſtory of the ſciences, will be made welcome, even with the fatigue of ſqueezing through many thorny paths, before a diſtinct view can be got of that ancient and ſtupendous fabric.

It will at the ſame time ſhow the hurt that Ariſtotle has done to the reaſoning faculty, by drawing it out of its natural courſe into devious paths. His artificial mode of reaſoning, is no leſs ſuperficial than intricate: I ſay, ſuperficial; for in none of his logical works, is a ſingle truth attempted to be proved by ſyllogiſm that requires a proof: the propoſitions

propositions he undertakes to prove by syllogism, are all of them self-evident. Take for instance the following proposition, That man has a power of self-motion. To prove this, he assumes the following axiom, upon which indeed every one of his syllogisms are founded, That whatever is true of a number of particulars joined together, holds true of every one separately; which is thus expressed in logical terms, Whatever is true of the genus, holds true of every species. Founding upon that axiom, he reasons thus: "All animals have a "power of self-motion: man is an animal: *ergo*, "man has a power of self-motion." Now if all animals have a power of self-motion, it requires no argument to prove, that man, an animal, has that power: and therefore, what he gives as a conclusion or consequence, is not really so; it is not *inferred* from the fundamental proposition, but is *included* in it. At the same time, the self-motive power of man, is a fact that cannot be known but from experience; and it is more clearly known from experience than that of any other animal. Now, in attempting to prove man to be a self-motive animal, is it not absurd, to found the argument on a proposition less clear than that undertaken to be demonstrated? What is here observed, will be found applicable to the greater part, if not the whole, of his syllogisms.

Unless for the reason now given, it would appear singular, that Aristotle never attempts to apply

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twenty years a favourite scholar of Plato, and tutor to Alexander the Great; who both honoured him with his friendship, and supplied him with every thing necessary for the prosecution of his inquiries.

These advantages he improved by indefatigable study, and immense reading. He was the first, we know, says Strabo, who composed a library. And in this the Egyptian and Pergamenian kings, copied his example. As to his genius, it would be disrespectful to mankind, not to allow an uncommon share to a man who governed the opinions of the most enlightened part of the species near two thousand years.

If his talents had been laid out solely for the discovery of truth and the good of mankind, his laurels would have remained for ever fresh: but he seems to have had a greater passion for fame than for truth, and to have wanted rather to be admired as the prince of philosophers than to be useful: so that it is dubious, whether there be in his character, most of the philosopher or of the sophist. The opinion of Lord Bacon is not without probability, That his ambition was as boundless as that of his royal pupil; the one aspiring at universal monarchy over the bodies and fortunes of men, the other over their opinions. If this was the case, it cannot be said, that the philosopher pursued his aim with less industry, less ability, or less success than the hero.

His

His writings carry too evident marks of that philoſophical pride, vanity, and envy, which have often ſullied the character of the learned. He determines boldly things above all human knowledge; and enters upon the moſt difficult queſtions, as his pupil entered on a battle, with full aſſurance of ſucceſs. He delivers his deciſions oracularly, and without any fear of miſtake. Rather than confeſs his ignorance, he hides it under hard words and ambiguous expreſſions, of which his interpreters can make what they pleaſe. There is even reaſon to ſuſpect, that he wrote often with affected obſcurity, either that the air of myſtery might procure greater veneration, or that his books might be underſtood only by the adepts who had been initiated in his philoſophy.

His conduct towards the writers that went before him has been much cenſured. After the manner of the Ottoman princes, ſays Lord Verulam, he thought his throne could not be ſecure unleſs he killed all his brethren. Ludovicus Vives charges him with detracting from all philoſophers, that he might derive that glory to himſelf, of which he robbed them. He rarely quotes an author but with a view to cenſure, and is not very fair in repreſenting the opinions which he cenſures.

The faults we have mentioned are ſuch as might be expected in a man, who had the daring ambition to be tranſmitted to all future ages, as the

prince of philosophers, as one who had carried every branch of human knowledge to its utmost limit; and who was not very scrupulous about the means he took to obtain his end.

We ought, however, to do him the justice to observe, that although the pride and vanity of the sophist appear too much in his writings in abstract philosophy; yet in natural history the fidelity of his narrations seems to be equal to his industry; and he always distinguishes between what he knew and what he had by report. And even in abstract philosophy, it would be unfair to impute to Aristotle all the faults, all the obscurities, and all the contradictions, that are to be found in his writings. The greatest part, and perhaps the best part, of his writings is lost. There is reason to doubt whether some of those we ascribe to him be really his; and whether what are his be not much vitiated and interpolated. These suspicions are justified by the fate of Aristotle's writings, which is judiciously related, from the best authorities, in Bayle's dictionary, under the article *Tyrannion*, to which I refer.

His books in logic which remain, are, 1. One book of the Categories. 2. One of Interpretation. 3. First Analytics, two books. 4. Last Analytics, two books. 5. Topics, eight books. 6. Of Sophisms, one book. Diogenes Laertius mentions many others that are lost. Those I have mentioned have commonly been published together, under

the

the name of *Ariſtotle's Organon*, or *his Logic*; and for many ages, Porphyry's Introduction to the Categories has been prefixed to them.

SECT. 2. *Of Porphyry's Introduction.*

In this Introduction, which is addreſſed to Chryſoarius, the author obſerves, That in order to underſtand Ariſtotle's doctrine concerning the categories, it is neceſſary to know what a *genus* is, what a *ſpecies*, what a *ſpecific difference*, what a *property*, and what an *accident*; that the knowledge of theſe is alſo very uſeful in definition, in diviſion, and even in demonſtration; therefore he propoſes, in this little tract, to deliver ſhortly and ſimply the doctrine of the ancients, and chiefly of the Peripatetics, concerning theſe five *predicables*; avoiding the more intricate queſtions concerning them; ſuch as, Whether *genera* and *ſpecies* do really exiſt in nature? or, Whether they are only conceptions of the human mind? If they exiſt in nature, Whether they are corporeal or incorporeal? and, Whether they are inherent in the objects of ſenſe, or disjoined from them? Theſe, he ſays, are very difficult queſtions, and require accurate diſcuſſion; but that he is not to meddle with them.

After this preface, he explains very minutely each of the five words above mentioned, divides and ſubdivides each of them, and then purſues all the

the agreements and differences between one and another through fixteen chapters.

Sect. 3. *Of the Categories.*

The book begins with an explication of what is meant by univocal words, what by equivocal, and what by denominative. Then it is obferved, that what we fay is either fimple, without compofition or ftructure, as *man, horfe;* or, it has compofition and ftructure, as, *a man fights, the horfe runs.* Next comes a diftinction between a fubject of predication; that is, a fubject of which any thing is affirmed or denied, and a fubject of inhefion. Thefe things are faid to be inherent in a fubject, which, although they are not a part of the fubject, cannot poffibly exift without it, as figure in the thing figured. Of things that are, fays Ariftotle, fome may be predicated of a fubject, but are in no fubject; as *man* may be predicated of James or John, but is not in any fubject. Some again are in a fubject, but can be predicated of no fubject. Thus, my knowledge in grammar is in me as its fubject, but it can be predicated of no fubject; becaufe it is an individual thing. Some are both in a fubject, and may be predicated of a fubject, as fcience; which is in the mind as its fubject, and may be predicated of geometry. Laftly, Some things can neither be in a fubject, nor be predicated of any fubject. Such are all individual fubftances, which cannot be predicated, becaufe they are individuals; and

and cannot be in a ſubject, becauſe they are ſubſtances. After ſome other ſubtilties about predicates and ſubjects, we come to the categories themſelves; the things above mentioned being called by the ſchoolmen the *anteprædicamenta*. It may be obſerved, however, that notwithſtanding the diſtinction now explained, the *being in a ſubject*, and the *being predicated truly of a ſubject*, are in the Analytics uſed as ſynonymous phraſes; and this variation of ſtyle has led ſome perſons to think that the Categories were not written by Ariſtotle.

Things that may be expreſſed without compoſition or ſtructure, are, ſays the author, reducible to the following heads. They are either *ſubſtance*, or *quantity*, or *quality*, or *relatives*, or *place*, or *time*, or *having*, or *doing*, or *ſuffering*. Theſe are the predicaments or categories. The firſt four are largely treated of in four chapters; the others are ſlightly paſſed over, as ſufficiently clear of themſelves. As a ſpecimen, I ſhall give a ſummary of what he ſays on the category of ſubſtance.

Subſtances are either primary, to wit, individual ſubſtances, or ſecondary, to wit, the genera and ſpecies of ſubſtances. Primary ſubſtances neither are in a ſubject, nor can be predicated of a ſubject; but all other things that exiſt, either are in primary ſubſtances, or may be predicated of them. For whatever can be predicated of that which is in a ſubject, may alſo be predicated of the ſubject itſelf. Primary ſubſtances are more ſubſtances than

than the ſecondary; and of the ſecondary, the ſpecies is more a ſubſtance than the genus. If there were no primary, there could be no ſecondary ſubſtances.

The properties of ſubſtance are theſe: 1. No ſubſtance is capable of intenſion or remiſſion. 2. No ſubſtance can be in any other thing as its ſubject of inheſion. 3. No ſubſtance has a contrary; for one ſubſtance cannot be contrary to another; nor can there be contrariety between a ſubſtance and that which is no ſubſtance. 4. The moſt remarkable property of ſubſtance, is, that one and the ſame ſubſtance, may, by ſome change in itſelf, become the ſubject of things that are contrary. Thus, the ſame body may be at one time hot, at another cold.

Let this ſerve as a ſpecimen of Ariſtotle's manner of treating the categories. After them, we have ſome chapters, which the ſchoolmen call *poſtprædicamenta;* wherein firſt, the four kinds of oppoſition of terms are explained; to wit, *relative*, *privative*, of *contrariety*, and of *contradiction*. This is repeated in all ſyſtems of logic. Laſt of all we have diſtinctions of the four Greek words which anſwer to the Latin ones, *prius*, *ſimul*, *motus*, and *habere*.

SECT. 4. *Of the book concerning Interpretation.*

We are to conſider, ſays Ariſtotle, what a noun is, what a verb, what affirmation, what negation, what

what speech. Words are the signs of what passeth in the mind; writing is the sign of words. The signs both of writing and of words are different in different nations, but the operations of mind signified by them are the same. There are some operations of thought which are neither true nor false. These are expressed by nouns or verbs singly, and without composition.

A noun is a sound, which, by compact, signifies something without respect to time, and of which no part has signification by itself. The cries of beasts may have a natural signification, but they are not nouns; we give that name only to sounds which have their signification by compact. The cases of a noun, as the genitive, dative, are not nouns. *Non homo* is not a noun, but, for distinction's sake, may be called a *nomen infinitum*.

A verb signifies something by compact with relation to time. Thus *valet* is a verb; but *valetudo* is a noun, because its signification has no relation to time. It is only the present tense of the indicative that is properly called a verb; the other tenses and moods are variations of the verb. *Non valet* may be called a *verbum infinitum*.

Speech is sound significant by compact, of which some part is also significant. And it is either enunciative, or not enunciative. Enunciative speech is that which affirms or denies. As to speech which is not enunciative, such as a prayer or wish, the consideration of it belongs to oratory, or poetry. Every

Every enunciative ſpeech muſt have a verb, or ſome variation of a verb. Affirmation is the enunciation of one thing concerning another. Negation is the enunciation of one thing from another. Contradiction is an affirmation and negation that are oppoſite. This is a ſummary of the firſt ſix chapters.

The ſeventh and eighth treat of the various kinds of enunciations or propoſitions, univerſal, particular, indefinite, and ſingular; and of the various kinds of oppoſition in propoſitions, and the axioms concerning them. Theſe things are repeated in every ſyſtem of logic. In the ninth chapter, he endeavours to prove, by a long metaphyſical reaſoning, that propoſitions reſpecting future contingencies are not, determinately, either true or falſe; and that if they were, it would follow, that all things happen neceſſarily, and could not have been otherwiſe than as they are. The remaining chapters contain many minute obſervations concerning the equipollency of propoſitions both pure and modal.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

REMARKS.

SECT. 1. *On the Five Predicables.*

THE writers on logic have borrowed their materials almoſt entirely from Ariſtotle's Organon, and Porphyry's Introduction. The Organon, however, was not written by Ariſtotle as one work. It comprehends various tracts, written without the view of making them parts of one whole, and afterwards thrown together by his editors under one name on account of their affinity. Many of his books that are loſt, would have made a part of the Organon if they had been ſaved.

The three treatiſes of which we have given a brief account, are unconnected with each other, and with thoſe that follow. And although the firſt was undoubtedly compiled by Porphyry, and the two laſt probably by Ariſtotle, yet I conſider them as the venerable remains of a philoſophy more ancient than Ariſtotle. Archytas of Tarentum, an eminent mathematician and philoſopher

of

of the Pythagorean ſchool, is ſaid to have wrote upon the ten categories; and the five predicables probably had their origin in the ſame ſchool. Ariſtotle, though abundantly careful to do juſtice to himſelf, does not claim the invention of either. And Porphyry, without aſcribing the latter to Ariſtotle, profeſſes only to deliver the doctrine of the ancients and chiefly of the Peripatetics, concerning them.

The writers on logic have divided that ſcience into three parts; the firſt treating of ſimple apprehenſion and of terms; the ſecond, of judgment and of propoſitions; and the third, of reaſoning and of ſyllogiſms. The materials of the firſt part are taken from Porphyry's Introduction and the Categories; and thoſe of the ſecond from the book of Interpretation.

A predicable, according to the grammatical form of the word, might ſeem to ſignify, whatever may be predicated, that is, affirmed or denied, of a ſubject: and in that ſenſe every predicate would be a predicable. But logicians give a different meaning to the word. They divide propoſitions into certain claſſes, according to the relation which the predicate of the propoſition bears to the ſubject. The firſt claſs is that wherein the predicate is the *genus* of the ſubject; as when we ſay, *This is a triangle, Jupiter is a planet.* In the ſecond claſs, the predicate is a *ſpecies* of the ſubject; as when we ſay, *This triangle is right-angled.* A third

third clafs is when the predicate is the fpecific difference of the fubject; as when we fay, *Every triangle has three fides and three angles.* A fourth when the predicate is a property of the fubject; as when we fay, *The angles of every triangle are equal to two right angles.* And a fifth clafs is when the predicate is fomething accidental to the fubject; as when we fay, *This triangle is neatly drawn.*

Each of thefe claffes comprehends a great variety of propofitions, having different fubjects, and different predicates; but in each clafs the relation between the predicate and the fubject is the fame. Now it is to this relation that logicians have given the name of *a predicable.* Hence it is, that although the number of predicates be infinite, yet the number of predicables can be no greater than that of the different relations which may be in propofitions between the predicate and the fubject. And if all propofitions belong to one or other of the five claffes above mentioned, there can be but five predicables, to wit, *genus, fpecies, differentia, proprium,* and *accidens.* Thefe might, with more propriety perhaps, have been called *the five claffes of predicates;* but ufe has determined them to be called *the five predicables.*

It may alfo be obferved, that as fome objects of thought are individuals, fuch as, *Julius Cæfar, the City Rome;* fo others are common to many individuals, as *good, great, virtuous, vicious.* Of this laft kind are all the things that are expreffed by ad-

 jectives.

jectives. Things common to many individuals, were by the ancients called *univerſals*. All predicates are univerſals, for they have the nature of adjectives; and, on the other hand, all univerſals may be predicates. On this account, univerſals may be divided into the ſame claſſes as predicates; and as the five claſſes of predicates above mentioned have been called the five predicables, ſo by the ſame kind of phraſeology they have been called *the five univerſals*; although they may more properly be called the *five claſſes of univerſals*.

The doctrine of the five univerſals or predicables makes an eſſential part of every ſyſtem of logic, and has been handed down without any change to this day. The very name of *predicables* ſhews, that the author of this diviſion, whoever he was, intended it as a complete enumeration of all the kinds of things that can be affirmed of any ſubject; and ſo it has always been underſtood. It is accordingly implied in this diviſion, that all that can be affirmed of any thing whatever, is either the *genus* of the thing, or its *ſpecies*, or its *ſpecific difference*, or ſome *property* or *accident* belonging to it.

Burgerſdick, a very acute writer in logic, ſeems to have been aware, that ſtrong objections might be made to the five predicables, conſidered as a complete enumeration: but, unwilling to allow any imperfection in this ancient diviſion, he endeavours to reſtrain the meaning of the word *predicable*,

dicable, ſo as to obviate objections. Thoſe things only, ſays he, are to be accounted predicables, which may be affirmed of *many individuals*, *truly*, *properly*, and *immediately*. The conſequence of putting ſuch limitations upon the word *predicable* is, that in many propoſitions, perhaps in moſt, the predicate is not a predicable. But admitting all his limitations, the enumeration will ſtill be very incomplete: for of many things we may affirm truly, properly, and immediately, their exiſtence, their end, their cauſe, their effect, and various relations which they bear to other things. Theſe, and perhaps many more, are predicables in the ſtrict ſenſe of the word, no leſs than the five which have been ſo long famous.

Although Porphyry and all ſubſequent writers, make the predicables to be, in number, five; yet Ariſtotle himſelf, in the beginning of the Topics, reduces them to four; and demonſtrates, that there can be no more. We ſhall give his demonſtration when we come to the Topics; and ſhall only here obſerve, that as Burgerſdick juſtifies the fivefold diviſion, by reſtraining the meaning of the word *predicable*; ſo Ariſtotle juſtifies the fourfold diviſion, by enlarging the meaning of the words *property* and *accident*.

After all, I apprehend, that this ancient diviſion of predicables with all its imperfections will bear a compariſon with thoſe which have been ſubſti-

tuted in its ſtead by the moſt celebrated modern philoſophers.

Locke, in his Eſſay on the Human Underſtanding, having laid it down as a principle, That all our knowledge conſiſts in perceiving certain agreements and diſagreements between our ideas, reduces theſe agreements and diſagreements to four heads: to wit, 1. Identity and diverſity; 2. Relation; 3. Coexiſtence; 4. Real Exiſtence *. Here are four predicables given as a complete enumeration, and yet not one of the ancient predicables is included in the number.

The author of the Treatiſe of Human Nature, proceeding upon the ſame principle that all our knowledge is only a perception of the relations of our ideas, obſerves, "That it may perhaps be eſteemed "an endleſs taſk, to enumerate all thoſe qualities "which admit of compariſon, and by which the "ideas of philoſophical relation are produced: "but if we diligently conſider them, we ſhall find, "that without difficulty they may be compriſed "under ſeven general heads: 1. Reſemblance; "2. Identity; 3. Relations of Space and Time; "4. Relations of Quantity and Number; 5. De-"grees of Quality; 6. Contrariety; 7. Cauſa-"tion †". Here again are ſeven predicables given as a complete enumeration, wherein all the predicables of the ancients, as well as two of Locke's are left out.

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* Book 4. chap. 1. † Vol. 1. p. 33. and 125.

The ancients in their divifion attended only to categorical propofitions which have one fubject and one predicate; and of thefe to fuch only as have a general term for their fubject. The moderns, by their definition of knowledge, have been led to attend only to relative propofitions, which exprefs a relation between two fubjects, and thefe fubjects they fuppofe to be always ideas.

SECT. 2. *On the Ten Categories, and on Divifions in general.*

The intention of the categories or predicaments is, to mufter every object of human apprehenfion under ten heads: for the categories are given as a complete enumeration of every thing which can be expreffed without *compofition* and *ftructure*; that is, of every thing that can be either the fubject or the predicate of a propofition. So that as every foldier belongs to fome company, and every company to fome regiment; in like manner every thing that can be the object of human thought, has its place in one or other of the ten categories; and by dividing and fubdividing properly the feveral categories, all the notions that enter into the human mind may be muftered in rank and file, like an army in the day of battle.

The perfection of the divifion of categories into ten heads, has been ftrenuoufly defended by the

 followers

followers of Ariſtotle, as well as that of the five predicables. They are indeed of kin to each other: they breathe the ſame ſpirit, and probably had the ſame origin. By the one we are taught to marſhal every term that can enter into a propoſition, either as ſubject or predicate; and by the other, we are taught all the poſſible relations which the ſubject can have to the predicate. Thus, the whole furniture of the human mind is preſented to us at one view, and contracted, as it were, into a nut-ſhell. To attempt, in ſo early a period, a methodical delineation of the vaſt region of human knowledge, actual and poſſible, and to point out the limits of every diſtrict, was indeed magnanimous in a high degree, and deſerves our admiration, while we lament that the human powers are unequal to ſo bold a flight.

A regular diſtribution of things under proper claſſes or heads, is, without doubt, a great help both to memory and judgment. As the philoſopher's province includes all things human and divine that can be objects of inquiry, he is naturally led to attempt ſome general diviſion, like that of the categories. And the invention of a diviſion of this kind, which the ſpeculative part of mankind acquieſced in for two thouſand years, marks a ſuperiority of genius in the inventor, whoever he was. Nor does it appear, that the general diviſions, which, ſince the decline of the Peripatetic philoſophy,

philosophy, have been substituted in place of the ten categories, are more perfect.

Locke has reduced all things to three categories; to wit, substances, modes, and relations. In this division, time, space, and number, three great objects of human thought, are omitted.

The author of the Treatise of Human Nature has reduced all things to two categories; to wit, ideas and impressions: a division which is very well adapted to his system; and which puts me in mind of another made by an excellent mathematician in a printed thesis I have seen. In it the author, after a severe censure of the ten categories of the Peripatetics, maintains, that there neither are, nor can be more than two categories of things; to wit, *data* and *quæsita*.

There are two ends that may be proposed by such divisions. The first is, to methodize or digest in order what a man actually knows. This is neither unimportant nor impracticable; and in proportion to the solidity and accuracy of a man's judgment, his divisions of the things he knows, will be elegant and useful. The same subject may admit, and even require, various divisions, according to the different points of view from which we contemplate it: nor does it follow, that because one division is good, therefore another is naught. To be acquainted with the divisions of the logicians and metaphysicians, without a superstitious attachment to them, may be of use in dividing the same

ſubjects, or even thoſe of a different nature. Thus, Quinctilian borrows from the ten categories his diviſion of the topics of rhetorical argumentation. Of all methods of arrangement, the moſt antiphiloſophical ſeems to be the invention of this age; I mean, the arranging the arts and ſciences by the letters of the alphabet, in dictionaries and encyclopedies. With theſe authors the categories are, A, B, C, &c.

Another end commonly propoſed by ſuch diviſions, but very rarely attained, is to exhauſt the ſubject divided; ſo that nothing that belongs to it ſhall be omitted. It is one of the general rules of diviſion in all ſyſtems of logic, That the diviſion ſhould be adequate to the ſubject divided: a good rule, without doubt; but very often beyond the reach of human power. To make a perfect diviſion, a man muſt have a perfect comprehenſion of the whole ſubject at one view. When our knowledge of the ſubject is imperfect, any diviſion we can make, muſt be like the firſt ſketch of a painter, to be extended, contracted, or mended, as the ſubject ſhall be found to require. Yet nothing is more common, not only among the ancient, but even among modern philoſophers, than to draw, from their incomplete diviſions, concluſions which ſuppoſe them to be perfect.

A diviſion is a repoſitory which the philoſopher frames for holding his ware in convenient order. The philoſopher maintains, that ſuch or ſuch a

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thing is not good ware, becaufe there is no place in his ware-room that fits it. We are apt to yield to this argument in philofophy, but it would appear ridiculous in any other traffic.

Peter Ramus, who had the fpirit of a reformer in philofophy, and who had force of genius fufficient to fhake the Ariftotelian fabric in many parts, but infufficient to erect any thing more folid in its place, tried to remedy the imperfection of philofophical divifions, by introducing a new manner of dividing. His divifions always confifted of two members; one of which was contradictory of the other; as if one fhould divide England into Middlefex and what is not Middlefex. It is evident that thefe two members comprehend all England: for the logicians obferve, that a term along with its contradictory, comprehend all things. In the fame manner, we may divide what is not Middlefex into Kent and what is not Kent. Thus one may go on by divifions and fubdivifions that are abfolutely complete. This example may ferve to give an idea of the fpirit of Ramean divifions, which were in no fmall reputation about two hundred years ago.

Ariftotle was not ignorant of this kind of divifion. But he ufed it only as a touchftone to prove by induction the perfection of fome other divifion, which indeed is the beft ufe that can be made of it. When applied to the common purpofe of divifion, it is both inelegant, and burdenfome to the memory;

memory; and, after it has put one out of breath by endless subdivisions, there is still a negative term left behind, which shews that you are no nearer the end of your journey than when you began.

Until some more effectual remedy be found for the imperfection of divisions, I beg leave to propose one more simple than that of Ramus. It is this: When you meet with a division of any subject imperfectly comprehended, add to the last member an *et cætera*. That this *et cætera* makes the division complete, is undeniable; and therefore it ought to hold its place as a member, and to be always understood, whether expressed or not, until clear and positive proof be brought that the division is complete without it. And this same *et cætera* is to be the repository of all members that shall in any future time shew a good and valid right to a place in the subject.

Sect. 3. *On Distinctions.*

Having said so much of logical divisions, we shall next make some remarks upon distinctions.

Since the philosophy of Aristotle fell into disrepute, it has been a common topic of wit and raillery, to inveigh against metaphysical distinctions. Indeed the abuse of them in the scholastic ages, seems to justify a general prejudice against them: and shallow thinkers and writers have good reason to be jealous of distinctions, because they make

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ſad work when applied to their flimſy compoſitions. But every man of true judgment, while he condemns diſtinctions that have no foundation in the nature of things, muſt perceive, that indiſcriminately to decry diſtinctions, is to renounce all pretenſions to juſt reaſoning: for as falſe reaſoning commonly proceeds from confounding things that are different; ſo without diſtinguiſhing ſuch things, it is impoſſible to avoid error, or detect ſophiſtry. The authority of Aquinas, or Suarez, or even of Ariſtotle, can neither ſtamp a real value upon diſtinctions of baſe metal, nor hinder the currency of thoſe of true metal.

Some diſtinctions are verbal, others are real. The firſt kind diſtinguiſh the various meanings of a word; whether proper, or metaphorical. Diſtinctions of this kind make a part of the grammar of a language, and are often abſurd when tranſlated into another language. Real diſtinctions are equally good in all languages, and ſuffer no hurt by tranſlation. They diſtinguiſh the different ſpecies contained under ſome general notion, or the different parts contained in one whole.

Many of Ariſtotle's diſtinctions are verbal merely; and therefore, more proper materials for a dictionary of the Greek language, than for a philoſophical treatiſe. At leaſt, they ought never to have been tranſlated into other languages, when the idiom of the language will not juſtify them: for this is to adulterate the language, to introduce foreign

reign idioms into it without neceffity or ufe, and to make it ambiguous where it was not. The diftinctions in the end of the Categories of the four words, *prius*, *fimul*, *motus*, and *habere*, are all verbal.

The modes or fpecies of *prius*, according to Ariftotle, are five. One thing may be prior to another; firft, in point of time; fecondly, in point of dignity; thirdly, in point of order; and fo forth. The modes of *fimul* are only three. It feems this word was not ufed in the Greek with fo great latitude as the other, although they are relative terms.

The modes or fpecies of *motion* he makes to be fix, to-wit, generation, corruption, increafe, decreafe, alteration, and change of place.

The modes or fpecies of *having* are eight. 1. Having a quality or habit, as having wifdom. 2. Having quantity or magnitude. 3. Having things adjacent, as having a fword. 4. Having things as parts, as having hands or feet. 5. Having in a part or on a part, as having a ring on one's finger. 6. Containing, as a cafk is faid to have wine. 7. Poffeffing, as having lands or houfes. 8. Having a wife.

Another diftinction of this kind is Ariftotle's diftinction of caufes; of which he makes four kinds, efficient, material, formal, and final. Thefe diftinctions may deferve a place in a dictionary of the

the Greek language; but in English or Latin they adulterate the language. Yet ſo fond were the ſchoolmen of diſtinctions of this kind, that they added to Ariſtotle's enumeration, an impulſive cauſe, an exemplary cauſe, and I don't know how many more. We ſeem to have adopted into Engliſh a final cauſe; but it is merely a term of art, borrowed from the Peripatetic philoſophy, without neceſſity or uſe: for the Engliſh word *end* is as good as *final cauſe*, though not ſo long nor ſo learned.

SECT. 4. *On Definitions.*

It remains that we make ſome remarks on Ariſtotle's definitions, which have expoſed him to much cenſure and ridicule. Yet I think it muſt be allowed, that in things which need definition and admit of it, his definitions are commonly judicious and accurate; and had he attempted to define ſuch things only, his enemies had wanted great matter of triumph. I believe it may likewiſe be ſaid in his favour, that until Locke's eſſay was wrote, there was nothing of importance delivered by philoſophers with regard to definition, beyond what Ariſtotle has ſaid upon that ſubject.

He conſiders a definition as a ſpeech declaring what a thing is. Every thing eſſential to the thing defined, and nothing more, muſt be contained in the definition. Now the eſſence of a thing con-

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fifts of these two parts: First, What is common to it with other things of the fame kind; and, fecondly, What diftinguifhes it from other things of the fame kind. The firft is called the *genus* of the thing, the fecond its *fpecific difference*. The definition therefore confifts of thefe two parts. And for finding them, we muft have recourfe to the ten categories; in one or other of which every thing in nature is to be found. Each category is a *genus*, and is divided into fo many fpecies, which are diftinguifhed by their fpecific differences. Each of thefe fpecies is again fubdivided into fo many fpecies, with regard to which it is a genus. This divifion and fubdivifion continues until we come to the loweft fpecies, which can only be divided into individuals, diftinguifhed from one another, not by any fpecific difference, but by accidental differences of time, place, and other circumftances.

The category itfelf being the higheft genus, is in no refpect a fpecies, and the loweft *fpecies* is in no refpect a *genus*; but every intermediate order is a genus compared with thofe that are below it, and a fpecies compared with thofe above it. To find the definition of any thing, therefore, you muft take the genus which is immediately above its place in the category, and the fpecific *difference*, by which it is diftinguifhed from other fpecies of the fame *genus*. Thefe two make a perfect definition. This I take to be the fubftance of Ariftotle's

ftotle's fyftem; and probably the fyftem of the Pythagorean fchool before Ariftotle, concerning definition.

But notwithftanding the fpecious appearance of this fyftem, it has its defects. Not to repeat what was before faid of the imperfection of the divifion of things into ten categories, the fubdivifions of each category are no lefs imperfect. Ariftotle has given fome fubdivifions of a few of them; and, as far as he goes, his followers pretty unanimoufly take the fame road. But when they attempt to go farther, they take very different roads. It is evident, that if the feries of each category could be completed, and the divifion of things into categories could be made perfect, ftill the higheft genus in each category could not be defined, becaufe it is not a fpecies; nor could individuals be defined, becaufe they have no fpecific difference. There are alfo many fpecies of things, whofe fpecific difference cannot be expreffed in language, even when it is evident to fenfe, or to the underftanding. Thus green, red, and blue, are very diftinct fpecies of colour; but who can exprefs in words wherein green differs from red or blue?

Without borrowing light from the ancient fyftem, we may perceive, that every definition muft confift of words that need no definition; and that to define the common words of a language that have no ambiguity, is trifling, if it could be done; the only ufe of a definition being to give a clear

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and adequate conception of the meaning of a word.

The logicians indeed diſtinguiſh between the definition of a word, and the definition of a thing; conſidering the former as the mean office of a lexicographer, but the laſt as the grand work of a philoſopher. But what they have ſaid about the definition of a thing, if it have a meaning, is beyond my comprehenſion. All the rules of definition agree to the definition of a word; and if they mean by the definition of a thing, the giving an adequate conception of the nature and eſſence of any thing that exiſts; this is impoſſible, and is the vain boaſt of men, unconſcious of the weakneſs of human underſtanding.

The works of God are but imperfectly known by us. We ſee their outſide; or perhaps we diſcover ſome of their qualities and relations, by obſervation and experiment aſſiſted by reaſoning: but even of the ſimpleſt of them we can give no definition that comprehends its real eſſence. It is juſtly obſerved by Locke, that nominal eſſences only, which are the creatures of our own minds, are perfectly comprehended by us, or can be properly defined; and even of theſe there are many too ſimple in their nature to admit of definition. When we cannot give preciſion to our notions by a definition, we muſt endeavour to do it by attentive reflection upon them, by obſerving minutely their agreements and differences, and eſpecially by

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a right underſtanding of the powers of our own minds, by which ſuch notions are formed.

The principles laid down by Locke with regard to definition, and with regard to the abuſe of words, carry conviction along with them. I take them to be one of the moſt important improvements made in logic ſince the days of Ariſtotle: not ſo much becauſe they enlarge our knowledge, as becauſe they make us ſenſible of our ignorance; and ſhew that a great part of what ſpeculative men have admired as profound philoſophy, is only a darkening of knowledge by words without underſtanding.

If Ariſtotle had underſtood theſe principles, many of his definitions, which furniſh matter of triumph to his enemies, had never ſeen the light: let us impute them to the times rather than to the man. The ſublime Plato, it is ſaid, thought it neceſſary to have the definition of a man, and could find none better than *Animal implume bipes;* upon which Diogenes ſent to his ſchool a cock with his feathers plucked off, deſiring to know whether it was a man or not.

SECT. 5. *On the Structure of Speech.*

The few hints contained in the beginning of the book concerning Interpretation relating to the ſtructure of ſpeech, have been left out in treatiſes of logic, as belonging rather to grammar; yet I

 apprehend

apprehend this is a rich field of philoſophical ſpeculation. Language being the expreſs image of human thought, the analyſis of the one muſt correſpond to that of the other. Nouns adjective and ſubſtantive, verbs active and paſſive, with their various moods, tenſes, and perſons, muſt be expreſſive of a like variety in the modes of thought. Things that are diſtinguiſhed in all languages, ſuch as ſubſtance and quality, action and paſſion, cauſe and effect, muſt be diſtinguiſhed by the natural powers of the human mind. The philoſophy of grammar, and that of the human underſtanding, are more nearly allied than is commonly imagined.

The ſtructure of language was purſued to a conſiderable extent, by the ancient commentators upon this book of Ariſtotle. Their ſpeculations upon this ſubject, which are neither the leaſt ingenious nor the leaſt uſeful part of the Peripatetic philoſophy, were neglected for many ages, and lay buried in ancient manuſcripts, or in books little known, till they were lately brought to light by the learned Mr Harris in his Hermes.

The definitions given by Ariſtotle, of a noun, of a verb, and of ſpeech, will hardly bear examination. It is eaſy in practice to diſtinguiſh the various parts of ſpeech ; but very difficult, if at all poſſible, to give accurate definitions of them.

He obſerves juſtly, that beſides that kind of ſpeech called a *propoſition*, which is always either true

true or falſe, there are other kinds which are neither true nor falſe; ſuch as, a prayer, or wiſh; to which we may add, a queſtion, a command, a promiſe, a contract, and many others. Theſe Ariſtotle pronounces to have nothing to do with his ſubject, and remits them to oratory, or poetry; and ſo they have remained baniſhed from the regions of philoſophy to this day: yet I apprehend, that an analyſis of ſuch ſpeeches, and of the operations of mind which they expreſs, would be of real uſe, and perhaps would diſcover how imperfect an enumeration the logicians have given of the powers of human underſtanding, when they reduce them to ſimple apprehenſion, judgment, and reaſoning.

SECT. 6. *On Propoſitions.*

Mathematicians uſe the word *propoſition* in a larger ſenſe than logicians. A problem is called a *propoſition* in mathematics, but in logic it is not a propoſition: it is one of thoſe ſpeeches which are not enunciative, and which Ariſtotle remits to oratory or poetry.

A propoſition, according to Ariſtotle, is a ſpeech wherein one thing is affirmed or denied of another. Hence it is eaſy to diſtinguiſh the thing affirmed or denied, which is called *the predicate*; from the thing of which it is affirmed or denied; which is called *the ſubject*; and theſe two are call-

ed *the terms of the propoſition.* Hence likewiſe it appears, that propoſitions are either affirmative or negative; and this is called *their quality.* All affirmative propoſitions have the ſame quality, ſo likewiſe have all negative; but an affirmative and a negative are contrary in their quality.

When the ſubject of a propoſition is a general term, the predicate is affirmed or denied, either of the whole, or of a part. Hence propoſitions are diſtinguiſhed into univerſal and particular. *All men are mortal*, is an univerſal propoſition; *Some men are learned*, is a particular; and this is called *the quantity of the propoſition.* All univerſal propoſitions agree in quantity, as alſo all particular: but an univerſal and a particular are ſaid to differ in quantity. A propoſition is called *indefinite*, when there is no mark either of univerſality or particularity annexed to the ſubject: thus, *Man is of few days*, is an indefinite propoſition; but it muſt be underſtood either as univerſal or as particular, and therefore is not a third ſpecies, but by interpretation is brought under one of the other two.

There are alſo ſingular propoſitions, which have not a general term but an individual for their ſubject; as, *Alexander was a great conqueror.* Theſe are conſidered by logicians as univerſal, becauſe, the ſubject being indiviſible, the predicate is affirmed or denied of the whole, and not of a part only. Thus all propoſitions, with regard to quality,

lity, are either affirmative or negative; and with regard to quantity, are univerfal or particular; and taking in both quantity and quality, they are univerfal affirmatives, or univerfal negatives, or particular affirmatives, or particular negatives. Thefe four kinds, after the days of Ariftotle, came to be named by the names of the four firft vowels, A, E, I, O, according to the following diftich:

> *Afferit A, negat E, fed univerfaliter ambo;*
> *Afferit I, negat O, fed particulariter ambo.*

When the young logician is thus far inftructed in the nature of propofitions, he is apt to think there is no difficulty in analyfing any propofition, and fhewing its fubject and predicate, its quantity and quality; and indeed, unlefs he can do this, he will be unable to apply the rules of logic to ufe. Yet he will find, there are fome difficulties in this analyfis, which are overlooked by Ariftotle altogether; and although they are fometimes touched, they are not removed by his followers. For, 1. There are propofitions in which it is difficult to find a fubject and a predicate; as in thefe, *It rains*, *It fnows*. 2. In fome propofitions either term may be made the fubject or the predicate as you like beft; as in this, *Virtue is the road to happinefs*. 3. The fame example may ferve to fhew, that it is fometimes difficult to fay, whether a propofition be univerfal or particular. 4. The quality of fome propofitions is fo dubious, that logicians have never been able to agree whether they be affirmative

 or

or negative; as in this propoſition, *Whatever is inſentient is not animal.* 5. As there is one claſs of propoſitions which have only two terms, to wit, one ſubject and one predicate, which are called *categorical propoſitions;* ſo there are many claſſes that have more than two terms. What Ariſtotle delivers in this book is applicable only to categorical propoſitions; and to them only the rules concerning the converſion of propoſitions, and concerning the figures and modes of ſyllogiſms, are accommodated. The ſubſequent writers of logic have taken notice of ſome of the many claſſes of complex propoſitions, and have given rules adapted to them; but finding this work endleſs, they have left us to manage the reſt by the rules of common ſenſe.

CHAP. III.

ACCOUNT OF THE FIRST ANALYTICS.

SECT. I. *Of the Converſion of Propoſitions.*

IN attempting to give ſome account of the Analytics and of the Topics of Ariſtotle, ingenuity requires me to confeſs, that though I have often

often purposed to read the whole with care, and to understand what is intelligible, yet my courage and patience always failed before I had done. Why should I throw away so much time and painful attention upon a thing of so little real use? If I had lived in those ages when the knowledge of Aristotle's Organon entitled a man to the highest rank in philosophy, ambition might have induced me to employ upon it some years of painful study; and less, I conceive, would not be sufficient. Such reflections as these, always got the better of my resolution, when the first ardor began to cool. All I can say is, that I have read some parts of the different books with care, some slightly, and some perhaps not at all. I have glanced over the whole often, and when any thing attracted my attention, have dipped into it till my appetite was satisfied. Of all reading it is the most dry and the most painful, employing an infinite labour of demonstration about things of the most abstract nature, delivered in a laconic style, and often, I think, with affected obscurity; and all to prove general propositions, which when applied to particular instances appear self-evident.

There is probably but little in the Categories or in the book of Interpretation, that Aristotle could claim as his own invention; but the whole theory of syllogisms he claims as his own, and as the fruit of much time and labour. And indeed

it is a stately fabric, a monument of a great genius, which we could wish to have been more usefully employed. There must be something however adapted to please the human understanding, or to flatter human pride, in a work which occupied men of speculation for more than a thousand years. These books are called *Analytics*, because the intention of them is to resolve all reasoning into its simple ingredients.

The first book of the First Analytics, consisting of forty-six chapters, may be divided into four parts; the first treating of the conversion of propositions; the second, of the structure of syllogisms, in all the different figures and modes; the third, of the invention of a middle term; and the last, of the resolution of syllogisms. We shall give a brief account of each.

To convert a proposition, is to infer from it another proposition, whose subject is the predicate of the first, and whose predicate is the subject of the first. This is reduced by Aristotle to three rules. 1. An universal negative may be converted into an universal negative: thus, *No man is a quadruped*; therefore, *No quadruped is a man*. 2. An universal affirmative can be converted only into a particular affirmative: thus, *All men are mortal*; therefore, *Some mortal beings are men*. 3. A particular affirmative may be converted into a particular affirmative; as, *Some men are just*; therefore, *Some just persons are men*. When a proposition may

may be converted without changing its quantity, this is called *ſimple converſion*; but when the quantity is diminiſhed, as in the univerſal affirmative, it is called converſion *per accidens*.

There is another kind of converſion, omitted in this place by Ariſtotle, but ſupplied by his followers, called *converſion by contrapoſition*, in which the term that is contradictory to the predicate is put for the ſubject, and the quality of the propoſition is changed; as, *All animals are ſentient*; therefore, *What is inſentient is not an animal.* A fourth rule of converſion therefore is, That an univerſal affirmative, and a particular negative, may be converted by contrapoſition.

SECT. 2. *Of the Figures and Modes of pure Syllogiſms.*

A ſyllogiſm is an argument, or reaſoning, conſiſting of three propoſitions, the laſt of which, called *the concluſion*, is inferred from the two preceding, which are called *the premiſes*. The concluſion having two terms, a ſubject and a predicate, its predicate is called the *major* term, and its ſubject the *minor* term. In order to prove the concluſion, each of its terms is, in the premiſes, compared with a third term, called the *middle* term. By this means one of the premiſes will have for its two terms the major term and the middle term; and

and this premise is called the *major* premise, or the *major* proposition of the syllogism. The other premise must have for its two terms the minor term and the middle term, and it is called the *minor* proposition. Thus the syllogism consists of three propositions, distinguished by the names of the *major*, the *minor*, and the *conclusion*: and although each of these has two terms, a subject and a predicate, yet there are only three different terms in all. The major term is always the predicate of the conclusion, and is also either the subject or predicate of the major proposition. The minor term is always the subject of the conclusion, and is also either the subject or predicate of the minor proposition. The middle term never enters into the conclusion, but stands in both premises, either in the position of subject or of predicate.

According to the various positions which the middle term may have in the premises, syllogisms are said to be of various figures. Now all the possible positions of the middle term are only four: for, first, it may be the subject of the major proposition, and the predicate of the minor, and then the syllogism is of the first figure; or it may be the predicate of both premises, and then the syllogism is of the second figure; or it may be the subject of both, which makes a syllogism of the third figure; or it may be the predicate of the major proposition, and the subject of the minor, which makes the fourth figure. Aristotle takes no notice of

of the fourth figure. It was added by the famous Galen, and is often called *the Galenical figure.*

There is another divifion of fyllogifms according to their modes. The mode of a fyllogifm is determined by the quality and quantity of the propofitions of which it confifts. Each of the three propofitions muft be either an univerfal affirmative, or an univerfal negative, or a particular affirmative, or a particular negative. Thefe four kinds of propofitions, as was before obferved, have been named by the four vowels, A, E, I, O; by which means the mode of a fyllogifm is marked by any three of thofe four vowels. Thus A, A, A, denotes that mode in which the major, minor, and conclufion, are all univerfal affirmatives; E, A, E, denotes that mode in which the major and conclufion are univerfal negatives, and the minor is an univerfal affirmative.

To know all the poffible modes of fyllogifm, we muft find how many different combinations may be made of three out of the four vowels, and from the art of combination the number is found to be fixty-four. So many poffible modes there are in every figure; confequently in the three figures of Ariftotle there are one hundred and ninety-two, and in all the four figures two hundred and fifty-fix.

Now, the theory of fyllogifm requires, that we fhew what are the particular modes in each figure, which do, or do not, form a juft and conclufive fyllogifm,

logiſm, that ſo the legitimate may be adopted, and the ſpurious rejected. This Ariſtotle has ſhewn in the firſt three figures, examining all the modes one by one, and paſſing ſentence upon each; and from this examination he collects ſome rules which may aid the memory in diſtinguiſhing the falſe from the true, and point out the properties of each figure.

The firſt figure has only four legitimate modes. The major propoſition in this figure muſt be univerſal, and the minor affirmative; and it has this property, that it yields concluſions of all kinds, affirmative and negative, univerſal and particular.

The ſecond figure has alſo four legitimate modes. Its major propoſition muſt be univerſal, and one of the premiſes muſt be negative. It yields concluſions both univerſal and particular, but all negative.

The third figure has ſix legitimate modes. Its minor muſt always be affirmative; and it yields concluſions both affirmative and negative, but all particular.

Beſides the rules that are proper to each figure, Ariſtotle has given ſome that are common to all, by which the legitimacy of ſyllogiſms may be tried. Theſe may, I think, be reduced to five. 1. There muſt be only three terms in a ſyllogiſm. As each term occurs in two of the propoſitions, it muſt be preciſely the ſame in both: if it be not, the ſyllogiſm is ſaid to have four terms, which makes a vicious

vicious ſyllogiſm. 2. The middle term muſt be taken univerſally in one of the premiſes. 3. Both premiſes muſt not be particular propoſitions, nor both negative. 4. The concluſion muſt be particular, if either of the premiſes be particular; and negative, if either of the premiſes be negative. 5. No term can be taken univerſally in the concluſion, if it be not taken univerſally in the premiſes.

For underſtanding the ſecond and fifth of theſe rules, it is neceſſary to obſerve, that a term is ſaid to be taken univerſally, not only when it is the ſubject of an univerſal propoſition, but when it is the predicate of a negative propoſition; on the other hand, a term is ſaid to be taken particularly, when it is either the ſubject of a particular, or the predicate of an affirmative propoſition.

SECT. 3. *Of the Invention of a Middle Term.*

The third part of this book contains rules general and ſpecial for the invention of a middle term; and this the author conceives to be of great utility. The general rules amount to this, That you are to conſider well both terms of the propoſition to be proved; their definition, their properties, the things which may be affirmed or denied of them, and thoſe of which they may be affirmed or denied: theſe things collected together, are the materials from which your middle term is to be taken.

The ſpecial rules require you to conſider the quantity and quality of the propoſition to be proved,

We have likewife precepts given in this book, both to the affailant in a fyllogiftical difpute, how to carry on his attack with art, fo as to obtain the victory; and to the defendant, how to keep the enemy at fuch a diftance as that he fhall never be obliged to yield. From which we learn, that Ariftotle introduced in his own fchool, the practice of fyllogiftical difputation, inftead of the rhetorical difputations which the fophifts were wont to ufe in more ancient times.

CHAP. IV.

REMARKS.

SECT. 1. *Of the Converfion of Propofitions.*

WE have given a fummary view of the theory of pure fyllogifms as delivered by Ariftotle, a theory of which he claims the fole invention. And I believe it will be difficult, in any fcience, to find fo large a fyftem of truths of fo very abftract and fo general a nature, all fortified by demonftration, and all invented and perfected by one man. It fhows a force of genius and labour

bour of inveftigation, equal to the moft arduous attempts. I fhall now make fome remarks upon it.

As to the converfion of propofitions, the writers on logic commonly fatisfy themfelves with illuftrating each of the rules by an example, conceiving them to be felf-evident when applied to particular cafes. But Ariftotle has given demonftrations of the rules he mentions. As a fpecimen, I fhall give his demonftration of the firft rule. "Let A B be an univerfal negative pro-"pofition; I fay, that if A is in no B, it will fol-"low that B is in no A. If you deny this con-"fequence, let B be in fome A, for example, in "C; then the firft fuppofition will not be true; "for C is of the B's." In this demonftration, if I underftand it, the third rule of converfion is affumed, that if B is in fome A, then A muft be in fome B, which indeed is contrary to the firft fuppofition. If the third rule be affumed for proof of the firft, the proof of all the three goes round in a circle; for the fecond and third rules are proved by the firft. This is a fault in reafoning whioh Ariftotle condemns, and which I would be very unwilling to charge him with, if I could find any better meaning in his demonftration. But it is indeed a fault very difficult to be avoided, when men attempt to prove things that are felf-evident.

 The

The rules of conversion cannot be applied to all propositions, but only to those that are categorical; and we are left to the direction of common sense in the conversion of other propositions. To give an example: Alexander was the son of Philip; therefore Philip was the father of Alexander: A is greater than B; therefore B is less than A. These are conversions which, as far as I know, do not fall within any rule in logic; nor do we find any loss for want of a rule in such cases.

Even in the conversion of categorical propositions, it is not enough to transpose the subject and predicate. Both must undergo some change, in order to fit them for their new station: for in every proposition the subject must be a substantive, or have the force of a substantive; and the predicate must be an adjective, or have the force of an adjective. Hence it follows, that when the subject is an individual, the proposition admits not of conversion. How, for instance, shall we convert this proposition, God is omniscient?

These observations show, that the doctrine of the conversion of propositions is not so complete as it appears. The rules are laid down without any limitation; yet they are fitted only to one class of propositions, to wit, the categorical; and of these only to such as have a general term for their subject.

SECT.

SECT. 2. *On Additions made to Aristotle's Theory.*

Although the logicians have enlarged the firft and fecond parts of logic, by explaining fome technical words and diftinctions which Ariftotle has omitted, and by giving names to fome kinds of propofitions which he overlooks; yet in what concerns the theory of categorical fyllogifms, he is more full, more minute and particular, than any of them: fo that they feem to have thought this capital part of the Organon rather redundant than deficient.

It is true, that Galen added a fourth figure to the three mentioned by Ariftotle. But there is reafon to think that Ariftotle omitted the fourth figure, not through ignorance or inattention, but of defign, as containing only fome indirect modes, which, when properly expreffed, fall into the firft figure.

It is true alfo, that Peter Ramus, a profeffed enemy of Ariftotle, introduced fome new modes that are adapted to fingular propofitions; and that Ariftotle takes no notice of fingular propofitions, either in his rules of converfion, or in the modes of fyllogifm. But the friends of Ariftotle have fhewn, that this improvement of Ramus is more fpecious than ufeful. Singular propofitions have the force of univerfal propofitions, and are fubject to the fame rules. The definition given by Ariftotle of an univerfal propofition applies to them; and

therefore he might think, that there was no occasion to multiply the modes of syllogism upon their account.

These attempts, therefore, show rather inclination than power, to discover any material defect in Aristotle's theory.

The most valuable addition made to the theory of categorical syllogisms, seems to be the invention of those technical names given to the legitimate modes, by which they may be easily remembered, and which have been comprised in these barbarous verses.

> *Barbara*, *Celarent*, *Darii*, *Ferio*, dato primæ;
> *Cesare*, *Camestris*, *Festino*, *Baroco*, secundæ;
> Tertia grande sonans recitat *Darapti*, *Felapton*;
> Adjungens *Disamis*, *Datisi*, *Bocardo*, *Ferison*.

In these verses, every legitimate mode belonging to the three figures has a name given to it, by which it may be distinguished and remembered. And this name is so contrived as to denote its nature: for the name has three vowels, which denote the kind of each of its propositions.

Thus, a syllogism in *Bocardo* must be made up of the propositions denoted by the three vowels, O, A, O; that is, its major and conclusion must be particular negative propositions, and its minor an universal affirmative; and being in the third figure, the middle term must be the subject of both premises.

This

This is the myftery contained in the vowels of thofe barbarous words. But there are other myfteries contained in their confonants: for, by their means, a child may be taught to reduce any fyllogifm of the fecond or third figure to one of the firft. So that the four modes of the firft figure being directly proved to be conclufive, all the modes of the other two are proved at the fame time, by means of this operation of reduction. For the rules and manner of this reduction, and the different fpecies of it, called *oftenfive* and *per impoffible*, I refer to the logicians, that I may not difclofe all their myfteries.

The invention contained in thefe verfes is fo ingenious, and fo great an adminicle to the dextrous management of fyllogifms, that I think it very probable that Ariftotle had fome contrivance of this kind, which was kept as one of the fecret doctrines of his fchool, and handed down by tradition, until fome perfon brought it to light. This is offered only as a conjecture, leaving it to thofe who are better acquainted with the moft ancient commentators on the Analytics, either to refute or to confirm it.

SECT. 3. *On Examples ufed to illuftrate this Theory.*

We may obferve, that Ariftotle hardly ever gives examples of real fyllogifms to illuftrate his rules. In demonftrating the legitimate modes, he takes A, B, C, for the terms of the fyllogifm.

 Thus,

Thus, the firft mode of the firft figure is demonftrated by him in this manner. "For," fays he, "if A is attributed to every B, and B to every C, "it follows neceffarily, that A may be attributed "to every C." For difproving the illegitimate modes, he ufes the fame manner; with this difference, that he commonly for an example gives three real terms, fuch as, *bonum, habitus, prudentia*; of which three terms you are to make up a fyllogifm of the figure and mode in queftion, which will appear to be inconclufive.

The commentators and fyftematical writers in logic, have fupplied this defect; and given us real examples of every legitimate mode in all the figures. We acknowledge this to be charitably done, in order to affift the conception in matters fo very abftract; but whether it was prudently done for the honour of the art, may be doubted. I am afraid this was to uncover the nakednefs of the theory; it has undoubtedly contributed to bring it into contempt; for when one confiders the filly and uninftructive reafonings that have been brought forth by this grand organ of fcience, he can hardly forbear crying out, *Parturiunt montes, et nafcitur ridiculus mus.* Many of the writers of logic are acute and ingenious, and much practifed in the fyllogiftical art; and there muft be fome reafon why the examples they have given of fyllogifms are fo lean.

We

We ſhall ſpeak of the reaſon afterwards; and ſhall now give a ſyllogiſm in each figure as an example.

No work of God is bad;

The natural paſſions and appetites of men are the work of God;

Therefore none of them is bad.

In this ſyllogiſm, the middle term, *work of God*, is the ſubject of the major and the predicate of the minor; ſo that the ſyllogiſm is of the firſt figure. The mode is that called *Celarent;* the major and concluſion being both univerſal negatives, and the minor an univerſal affirmative. It agrees to the rules of the figure, as the major is univerſal, and the minor affirmative; it is alſo agreeable to all the general rules; ſo that it maintains its character in every trial. And to ſhow of what ductile materials ſyllogiſms are made, we may, by converting ſimply the major propoſition, reduce it to a good ſyllogiſm of the ſecond figure, and of the mode *Ceſare*, thus:

Whatever is bad is not the work of God;

All the natural paſſions and appetites of men are the work of God;

Therefore they are not bad.

Another example:

Every thing virtuous is praiſe-worthy;

Some pleaſures are not praiſe-worthy.

Therefore ſome pleaſures are not virtuous.

Here the middle term *praise-worthy* being the predicate of both premises, the syllogism is of the second figure; and seeing it is made up of the propositions, A, O, O, the mode is *Baroco*. It will be found to agree both with the general and special rules: and it may be reduced into a good syllogism of the first figure upon converting the major by contraposition, thus:

What is not praise-worthy is not virtuous;
Some pleasures are not praise-worthy;
Therefore some pleasures are not virtuous.

That this syllogism is conclusive, common sense pronounces, and all logicians must allow; but it is somewhat unpliable to rules, and requires a little straining to make it tally with them.

That it is of the first figure is beyond dispute; but to what mode of that figure shall we refer it? This is a question of some difficulty. For, in the first place, the premises seem to be both negative, which contradicts the third general rule; and moreover, it is contrary to a special rule of the first figure, That the minor should be negative. These are the difficulties to be removed.

Some logicians think, that the two negative particles in the major are equivalent to an affirmative; and that therefore the major proposition, *What is not praise-worthy, is not virtuous*, is to be accounted an affirmative proposition. This, if granted, solves one difficulty; but the other remains. The most ingenious solution, therefore, is this:

this: Let the middle term be *not praiſe-worthy.* Thus, making the negative particle a part of the middle term, the ſyllogiſm ſtands thus:

Whatever is *not praiſe-worthy* is not virtuous;
Some pleaſures are *not praiſe-worthy;*
Therefore ſome pleaſures are not virtuous.

By this analyſis, the major becomes an univerſal negative, the minor a particular affirmative, and the concluſion a particular negative, and ſo we have a juſt ſyllogiſm in *Ferio.*

We ſee, by this example, that the quality of propoſitions is not ſo invariable, but that, when occaſion requires, an affirmative may be degraded into a negative, or a negative exalted to an affirmative. Another example:

All Africans are black;
All Africans are men;
Therefore ſome men are black.

This is of the third figure, and of the mode *Darapti;* and it may be reduced to *Darii* in the firſt figure, by converting the minor.

All Africans are black;
Some men are Africans;
Therefore ſome men are black.

By this time I apprehend the reader has got as many examples of ſyllogiſms as will ſtay his appetite for that kind of entertainment.

SECT.

SECT. 4. *On the Demonstration of the Theory.*

Ariftotle and all his followers have thought it neceffary, in order to bring this theory of categorical fyllogifms to a fcience, to demonftrate, both that the fourteen authorifed modes conclude juftly, and that none of the reft do. Let us now fee how this has been executed.

As to the legitimate modes, Ariftotle and thofe who follow him the moft clofely, demonftrate the four modes of the firft figure directly from an axiom called the *Dictum de omni et nullo*. The amount of the axiom is, That what is affirmed of a whole *genus*, may be affirmed of all the fpecies and individuals belonging to that *genus*; and that what is denied of the whole genus, may be denied of its fpecies and individuals. The four modes of the firft figure are evidently included in this axiom. And as to the legitimate modes of the other figures, they are proved by reducing them to fome mode of the firft. Nor is there any other principle affumed in thefe reductions but the axioms concerning the converfion of propofitions, and in fome cafes the axioms concerning the oppofition of propofitions.

As to the illegitimate modes, Ariftotle has taken the labour to try and condemn them one by one in all the three figures: but this is done in fuch a manner that it is very painful to follow him. To give a fpecimen. In order to prove, that thofe modes

modes of the firſt figure in which the major is particular, do not conclude, he proceeds thus: "If "A is or is not in ſome B, and B in every C, no "concluſion follows. Take for the terms in the "affirmative caſe, *good, habit, prudence*, in the "negative, *good, habit, ignorance*." This laconic ſtyle, the uſe of ſymbols not familiar, and, in place of giving an example, his leaving us to form one from three aſſigned terms, give ſuch embarraſſment to a reader, that he is like one reading a book of riddles.

Having thus aſcertained the true and falſe modes of a figure, he ſubjoins the particular rules of that figure, which ſeem to be deduced from the particular caſes before determined. The general rules come laſt of all, as a general corollary from what goes before.

I know not whether it is from a diffidence of Ariſtotle's demonſtrations, or from an apprehenſion of their obſcurity, or from a deſire of improving upon his method, that almoſt all the writers in logic I have met with, have inverted his order, beginning where he ends, and ending where he begins. They firſt demonſtrate the general rules, which belong to all the figures, from three axioms; then from the general rules and the nature of each figure, they demonſtrate the ſpecial rules of each figure. When this is done, nothing remains but to apply theſe general and ſpecial rules, and to reject every mode which contradicts them.

This

This method has a very ſcientific appearance: and when we conſider, that by a few rules once demonſtrated, an hundred and ſeventy-eight falſe modes are deſtroyed at one blow, which Ariſtotle had the trouble to put to death one by one, it ſeems to be a great improvement. I have only one objection to the three axioms.

The three axioms are theſe: 1. Things which agree with the ſame third, agree with one another. 2. When one agrees with the third, and the other does not, they do not agree with one another. 3. When neither agrees with the third, you cannot thence conclude, either that they do, or do not agree with one another. If theſe axioms are applied to mathematical quantities, to which they ſeem to relate when taken literally, they have all the evidence that an axiom ought to have: but the logicians apply them in an analogical ſenſe to things of another nature. In order, therefore, to judge whether they are truly axioms, we ought to ſtrip them of their figurative dreſs, and to ſet them down in plain Engliſh, as the logicians underſtand them. They amount therefore to this. 1. If two things be affirmed of a third, or the third be affirmed of them; or if one be affirmed of the third, and the third affirmed of the other; then they may be affirmed one of the other. 2. If one is affirmed of the third, or the third of it, and the other denied of the third, or the third of it, they may be denied one of the other. 3. If both are denied

nied of the third, or the third of them; or if one is denied of the third, and the third denied of the other; nothing can be inferred.

When the three axioms are thus put in plain English, they ſeem not to have that degree of evidence which axioms ought to have; and if there is any defect of evidence in the axioms, this defect will be communicated to the whole edifice raiſed upon them.

It may even be ſuſpected, that an attempt by any method to demonſtrate that a ſyllogiſm is concluſive, is an impropriety ſomewhat like that of attempting to demonſtrate an axiom. In a juſt ſyllogiſm, the connection between the premiſes and the concluſion is not only real, but immediate; ſo that no propoſition can come between them to make their connection more apparent. The very intention of a ſyllogiſm is, to leave nothing to be ſupplied that is neceſſary to a complete demonſtration. Therefore a man of common underſtanding, who has a perfect comprehenſion of the premiſes, finds himſelf under a neceſſity of admitting the concluſion, ſuppoſing the premiſes to be true; and the concluſion is connected with the premiſes with all the force of intuitive evidence. In a word, an immediate concluſion is ſeen in the premiſes, by the light of common ſenſe; and where that is wanting, no kind of reaſoning will ſupply its place.

SECT.

SECT. 5. *On this Theory, considered as an Engine of Science.*

The flow progrefs of ufeful knowledge, during the many ages in which the fyllogiftic art was moft highly cultivated as the only guide to fcience, and its quick progrefs fince that art was difufed, fuggeft a prefumption againft it; and this prefumption is ftrengthened by the puerility of the examples which have always been brought to illuftrate its rules.

The ancients feem to have had too high notions, both of the force of the reafoning power in man, and of the art of fyllogifm as its guide. Mere reafoning can carry us but a very little way in moft fubjects. By obfervation, and experiments properly conducted, the ftock of human knowledge may be enlarged without end; but the power of reafoning alone, applied with vigour through a long life, would only carry a man round, like a horfe in a mill who labours hard but makes no progrefs. There is indeed an exception to this obfervation in the mathematical fciences. The relations of quantity are fo various and fo fufceptible of exact menfuration, that long trains of accurate reafoning on that fubject may be formed, and conclufions drawn very remote from the firft principles. It is in this fcience and thofe which depend upon it, that the power of reafoning triumphs; in other matters its trophies are inconfiderable.

fiderable. If any man doubt this, let him produce, in any fubject unconnected with mathematics, a train of reafoning of fome length, leading to a conclufion, which without this train of reafoning would never have been brought within human fight. Every man acquainted with mathematics can produce thoufands of fuch trains of reafoning. I do not fay, that none fuch can be produced in other fciences; but I believe they are few, and not eafily found; and that if they are found, it will not be in fubjects that can be expreffed by categorical propofitions, to which alone the theory of figure and mode extends.

In matters to which that theory extends, a man of good fenfe, who can diftinguifh things that differ, can avoid the fnares of ambiguous words, and is moderately practifed in fuch matters, fees at once all that can be inferred from the premifes; or finds, that there is but a very fhort ftep to the conclufion.

When the power of reafoning is fo feeble by nature, efpecially in fubjects to which this theory can be applied, it would be unreafonable to expect great effects from it. And hence we fee the reafon why the examples brought to illuftrate it by the moft ingenious logicians, have rather tended to bring it into contempt.

If it fhould be thought, that the fyllogiftic art may be an ufeful engine in mathematics, in which pure reafoning has ample fcope: Firft, It may be obferved,

obſerved, That facts are unfavourable to this opinion: for it does not appear, that Euclid, or Apollonius, or Archimedes, or Hugens, or Newton, ever made the leaſt uſe of this art; and I am even of opinion, that no uſe can be made of it in mathematics. I would not wiſh to advance this raſhly, ſince Ariſtotle has ſaid, that mathematicians reaſon for the moſt part in the firſt figure. What led him to think ſo was, that the firſt figure only yields concluſions that are univerſal and affirmative, and the concluſions of mathematics are commonly of that kind. But it is to be obſerved, that the propoſitions of mathematics are not categorical propoſitions, conſiſting of one ſubject and one predicate. They expreſs ſome relation which one quantity bears to another, and on that account muſt have three terms. The quantities compared make two, and the relation between them is a third. Now to ſuch propoſitions we can neither apply the rules concerning the converſion of propoſitions, nor can they enter into a ſyllogiſm of any of the figures or modes. We obſerved before, that this converſion, *A is greater than B*, therefore *B is leſs than A*, does not fall within the rules of converſion given by Ariſtotle or the logicians; and we now add, that this ſimple reaſoning, *A is equal to B, and B to C*; therefore *A is equal to C*, cannot be brought into any ſyllogiſm in figure and mode. There are indeed ſyllogiſms into which mathematical propoſitions may enter,

and

and of fuch we fhall afterwards fpeak: but they have nothing to do with the fyftem of figure and mode.

When we go without the circle of the mathematical fciences, I know nothing in which there feems to be fo much demonftration as in that part of logic which treats of the figures and modes of fyllogifm; but the few remarks we have made, fhew, that it has fome weak places: and befides, this fyftem cannot be ufed as an engine to rear itfelf.

The compafs of the fyllogiftic fyftem as an engine of fcience, may be difcerned by a compendious and general view of the conclufion drawn, and the argument ufed to prove it, in each of the three figures.

In the firft figure, the conclufion affirms or denies fomething of a certain fpecies or individual; and the argument to prove this conclufion is, That the fame thing may be affirmed or denied of the whole genus to which that fpecies or individual belongs.

In the fecond figure, the conclufion is, That fome fpecies or individual does not belong to fuch a genus; and the argument is, That fome attribute common to the whole genus does not belong to that fpecies or individual.

In the third figure, the conclufion is, That fuch an attribute belongs to part of a genus; and the argument is, That the attribute in queftion belongs

to a ſpecies or individual which is part of that genus.

I apprehend, that in this ſhort view, every concluſion that falls within the compaſs of the three figures, as well as the mean of proof, is comprehended. The rules of all the figures might be eaſily deduced from it; and it appears, that there is only one principle of reaſoning in all the three: ſo that it is not ſtrange, that a ſyllogiſm of one figure ſhould be reduced to one of another figure.

The general principle in which the whole terminates, and of which every categorical ſyllogiſm is only a particular application, is this, That what is affirmed or denied of the whole genus, may be affirmed or denied of every ſpecies and individual belonging to it. This is a principle of undoubted certainty indeed, but of no great depth. Ariſtotle and all the logicians aſſume it as an axiom or firſt principle, from which the ſyllogiſtic ſyſtem, as it were, takes its departure: and after a tedious voyage, and great expence of demonſtration, it lands at laſt in this principle as its ultimate concluſion. *O curas hominum! O quantum eſt in rebus inane!*

SECT. 6. *On Modal Syllogiſms.*

Categorical propoſitions, beſides their quantity and quality, have another affection, by which they are divided into pure and modal. In a pure propoſition,

pofition, the predicate is barely affirmed or denied of the fubject; but in a modal propofition, the affirmation or negation is modified, by being declared to be neceffary, or contingent, or poffible, or impoffible. Thefe are the four modes obferved by Ariftotle, from which he denominates a propofition modal. His genuine difciples maintain, that thefe are all the modes that can affect an affirmation or negation, and that the enumeration is complete. Others maintain, that this enumeration is incomplete; and that when an affirmation or negation is faid to be certain or uncertain, probable or improbable, this makes a modal propofition, no lefs than the four modes of Ariftotle. We fhall not enter into this difpute; but proceed to obferve, that the epithets of *pure* and *modal* are applied to fyllogifms as well as to propofitions. A pure fyllogifm is that in which both premifes are pure propofitions. A modal fyllogifm is that in which either of the premifes is a modal propofition.

The fyllogifms, of which we have already faid fo much, are thofe only which are pure as well as categorical. But when we confider, that through all the figures and modes, a fyllogifm may have one premife modal of any of the four modes, while the other is pure, or it may have both premifes modal, and that they may be either of the fame mode or of different modes; what prodigious variety arifes from all thefe combinations? Now it

is the bufinefs of a logician, to fhew how the conclufion is affected in all this variety of cafes. Ariftotle has done this in his First Analytics, with immenfe labour; and it will not be thought ftrange, that when he had employed only four chapters in difcuffing one hundred and ninety-two modes, true and falfe, of pure fyllogifms, he fhould employ fifteen upon modal fyllogifms.

I am very willing to excufe myfelf from entering upon this great branch of logic, by the judgment and example of thofe who cannot be charged either with want of refpect to Ariftotle, or with a low efteem of the fyllogiftic art.

Keckerman, a famous Dantzican profeffor, who fpent his life in teaching and writing logic, in his huge folio fyftem of that fcience, publifhed *anno* 1600, calls the doctrine of the modals the *crux logicorum*. With regard to the fcholaftic doctors, among whom this was a proverb, *De modalibus non guftabit afinus*, he thinks it very dubious, whether they tortured moft the modal fyllogifms, or were moft tortured by them. But thofe crabbed geniufes, fays he, made this doctrine fo very thorny, that it is fitter to tear a man's wits in pieces than to give them folidity. He defires it to be obferved, that the doctrine of the modals is adapted to the Greek language. The modal terms were frequently ufed by the Greeks in their difputations; and, on that account, are fo fully handled by Ariftotle; but in the Latin tongue you fhall hardly even

ever meet with them. Nor do I remember, in all my experience, fays he, to have obferved any man in danger of being foiled in a difpute, through his ignorance of the modals.

This author, however, out of refpect to Ariftotle, treats pretty fully of modal propofitions, fhewing how to diftinguifh their fubject and predicate, their quantity and quality. But the modal fyllogifms he paffes over altogether.

Ludovicus Vives, whom I mention, not as a devotee of Ariftotle, but on account of his own judgment and learning, thinks that the doctrine of modals ought to be banifhed out of logic, and remitted to grammar; and that if the grammar of the Greek tongue had been brought to a fyftem in the time of Ariftotle, that moft acute philofopher would have faved the great labour he has beftowed on this fubject.

Burgerfdick, after enumerating five claffes of modal fyllogifms, obferves, that they require many rules and cautions, which Ariftotle hath handled diligently; but that, as the ufe of them is not great, and their rules difficult, he thinks it not worth while to enter into the difcuffion of them; recommending to thofe who would underftand them, the moft learned paraprafe of Joannes Monlorius upon the firft book of the Firft Analytics.

All the writers of logic for two hundred years back that have fallen into my hands, have paffed over the rules of modal fyllogifms with as little

ceremony. So that this great branch of the doctrine of ſyllogiſm, ſo diligently handled by Ariſtotle, fell into neglect, if not contempt, even while the doctrine of pure ſyllogiſms continued in the higheſt eſteem. Moved by theſe authorities, I ſhall let this doctrine reſt in peace, without giving the leaſt diſturbance to its aſhes.

Sect. 7. *On Syllogiſms that do not belong to Figure and Mode.*

Ariſtotle gives ſome obſervations upon imperfect ſyllogiſms: ſuch as, the Enthimema, in which one of the premiſes is not expreſſed, but underſtood: Induction, wherein we collect an univerſal from a full enumeration of particulars: and Examples, which are an imperfect induction. The logicians have copied Ariſtotle upon theſe kinds of reaſoning, without any conſiderable improvement. But to compenſate the modal ſyllogiſms, which they have laid aſide, they have given rules for ſeveral kinds of ſyllogiſm, of which Ariſtotle takes no notice. Theſe may be reduced to two claſſes.

The firſt claſs comprehends the ſyllogiſms into which any excluſive, reſtrictive, exceptive, or reduplicative propoſition enters. Such propoſitions are by ſome called *exponible*, by others *imperfectly modal*. The rules given with regard to theſe are obvious, from a juſt interpretation of the propoſitions.



The

The ſecond claſs is that of hypothetical ſyllogiſms, which take that denomination from having a hypothetical propoſition for one or both premiſes. Moſt logicians give the name of *hypothetical* to all complex propoſitions which have more terms than one ſubject and one predicate. I uſe the word in this large ſenſe; and mean by hypothetical ſyllogiſms, all thoſe in which either of the premiſes conſiſts of more terms than two. How many various kinds there may be of ſuch ſyllogiſms, has never been aſcertained. The logicians have given names to ſome; ſuch as, the copulative, the conditional, by ſome called hypothetical, and the disjunctive.

Such ſyllogiſms cannot be tried by the rules of figure and mode. Every kind would require rules peculiar to itſelf. Logicians have given rules for ſome kinds; but there are many that have not ſo much as a name.

The Dilemma is conſidered by moſt logicians as a ſpecies of the disjunctive ſyllogiſm. A remarkable property of this kind is, that it may ſometimes be happily retorted: it is, it ſeems, like a hand-grenade, which by dextrous management may be thrown back, ſo as to ſpend its force upon the aſſailant. We ſhall conclude this tedious account of ſyllogiſms, with a dilemma mentioned by *A. Gellius*, and from him by many logicians, as inſoluble in any other way.

 "Euathlus,

"Euathlus, a rich young man, desirous of learn-
"ing the art of pleading, applied to Protagoras, a
"celebrated sophist, to instruct him, promising a
"great sum of money as his reward; one-half of
"which was paid down; the other half he bound
"himself to pay as soon as he should plead a cause
"before the judges, and gain it. Protagoras found
"him a very apt scholar; but, after he had made
"good progress, he was in no haste to plead causes.
"The master, conceiving that he intended by this
"means to shift off his second payment, took, as
"he thought, a sure method to get the better of
"his delay. He sued Euathlus before the judges;
"and, having opened his cause at the bar, he
"pleaded to this purpose. O most foolish young
"man, do you not see, that, in any event, I must
"gain my point? for if the judges give sentence
"for me, you must pay by their sentence; if
"against me, the condition of our bargain is ful-
"filled, and you have no plea left for your delay,
"after having pleaded and gained a cause. To
"which Euathlus answered. O most wise master,
"I might have avoided the force of your argu-
"ment, by not pleading my own cause. But, gi-
"ving up this advantage, do you not see, that
"whatever sentence the judges pass, I am safe?
"If they give sentence for me, I am acquitted by
"their sentence; if against me, the condition of
"our bargain is not fulfilled, by my pleading a
"cause, and losing it. The judges, thinking the
"arguments

"arguments unanſwerable on both ſides, put off
"the cauſe to a long day."

CHAP. V.

ACCOUNT OF THE REMAINING BOOKS OF THE ORGANON.

SECT. I. *Of the Laſt Analytics.*

IN the Firſt Analytics, ſyllogiſms are conſidered in reſpect of their form; they are now to be conſidered in reſpect of their matter. The form lies in the neceſſary connection between the premiſes and the concluſion; and where ſuch a connection is wanting, they are ſaid to be informal, or vicious in point of form.

But where there is no fault in the form, there may be in the matter; that is, in the propoſitions of which they are compoſed, which may be true or falſe, probable or improbable.

When the premiſes are certain, and the concluſion drawn from them in due form, this is demonſtration, and produces ſcience. Such ſyllogiſms

gifms are called *apodictical;* and are handled in the two books of the Laft Analytics. When the premifes are not certain, but probable only, fuch fyllogifms are called *dialectical;* and of them he treats in the eight books of the Topics. But there are fome fyllogifms which feem to be perfect both in matter and form, when they are not really fo; as, a face may feem beautiful which is but painted. Thefe being apt to deceive, and produce a falfe opinion, are called *fophiftical;* and they are the fubject of the book concerning Sophifms.

To return to the Laft Analytics, which treat of demonftration and of fcience: We fhall not pretend to abridge thefe books; for Ariftotle's writings do not admit of abridgment: no man in fewer words can fay what he fays; and he is not often guilty of repetition. We fhall only give fome of his capital conclufions, omitting his long reafonings and nice diftinctions, of which his genius was wonderfully productive.

All demonftration muft be built upon principles already known; and thefe upon others of the fame kind; until we come at laft to firft principles, which neither can be demonftrated, nor need to be, being evident of themfelves.

We cannot demonftrate things in a circle, fupporting the conclufion by the premifes, and the premifes by the conclufion. Nor can there be an infinite number of middle terms between the firft principle and the conclufion.

In

In all demonſtration, the firſt pricipſes, the concluſion, and all the intermediate propoſitions, muſt be neceſſary, general, and eternal truths: for of things fortuitous, contingent, or mutable, or of individual things, there is no demonſtration.

Some demonſtrations prove only, that the thing is thus affected; others prove, why it is thus affected. The former may be drawn from a remote cauſe, or from an effect: but the latter muſt be drawn from an immediate cauſe; and are the moſt perfect.

The firſt figure is beſt adapted to demonſtration, becauſe it affords concluſions univerſally affirmative; and this figure is commonly uſed by the mathematicians.

The demonſtration of an affirmative propoſition is preferable to that of a negative; the demonſtration of an univerſal to that of a particular; and direct demonſtration to that *ad abſurdum*.

The principles are more certain than the concluſion.

There cannot be opinion and ſcience of the ſame thing at the ſame time.

In the ſecond book we are taught, that the queſtions that may be put with regard to any thing, are four: 1. Whether the thing be thus affected. 2. Why it is thus affected. 3. Whether it exiſts. 4. What it is.

The laſt of theſe queſtions Ariſtotle, in good Greek, calls the *What is it* of a thing. The ſchoolmen,

men, in very barbarous Latin, called this, the *quiddity* of a thing. This quiddity, he proves by many arguments, cannot be demonſtrated, but muſt be fixed by a definition. This gives occaſion to treat of definition, and how a right definition ſhould be formed. As an example, he gives a definition of the number *three*, and defines it to be the firſt odd number.

In this book he treats alſo of the four kinds of cauſes; efficient, material, formal, and final.

Another thing treated of in this book is, the manner in which we acquire firſt principles, which are the foundation of all demonſtration. Theſe are not innate, becauſe we may be for a great part of life ignorant of them: nor can they be deduced demonſtratively from any antecedent knowledge, otherwiſe they would not be firſt principles. Therefore he concludes, that firſt principles are got by induction, from the informations of ſenſe. The ſenſes give us informations of individual things, and from theſe by induction we draw general concluſions: for it is a maxim with Ariſtotle, That there is nothing in the underſtanding which was not before in ſome ſenſe.

The knowledge of firſt principles, as it is not acquired by demonſtration, ought not to be called ſcience: and therefore he calls it *intelligence*.

SECT.

SECT. 2. *Of the Topics.*

The profeſſed deſign of the Topics is, to ſhew a method by which a man may be able to reaſon with probability and conſiſtency upon every queſtion that can occur.

Every queſtion is either about the genus of the ſubject, or its ſpecific difference, or ſomething proper to it, or ſomething accidental.

To prove that this diviſion is complete, Ariſtotle reaſons thus: Whatever is attributed to a ſubject, it muſt either be, that the ſubject can be reciprocally attributed to it, or that it cannot. If the ſubject and attribute can be reciprocated, the attribute either declares what the ſubject is, and then it is a definition; or it does not declare what the ſubject is, and then it is a property. If the attribute cannot be reciprocated, it muſt be ſomething contained in the definition, or not. If it be contained in the definition of the ſubject, it muſt be the genus of the ſubject, or its ſpecific difference; for the definition conſiſts of theſe two. If it be not contained in the definition of the ſubject, it muſt be an accident.

The furniture proper to fit a man for arguing dialectically may be reduced to theſe four heads: 1. Probable propoſitions of all ſorts, which may on occaſion be aſſumed in an argument. 2. Diſtinctions of words which are nearly of the ſame ſignification. 3. Diſtinctions of things which are not

not so far asunder but that they may be taken for one and the same. 4. Similitudes.

The second and the five following books are taken up in enumerating the topics or heads of argument that may be used in questions about the genus, the definition, the properties, and the accidents of a thing; and occasionally he introduces the topics for proving things to be the same, or different; and the topics for proving one thing to be better or worse than another.

In this enumeration of topics, Aristotle has shewn more the fertility of his genius, than the accuracy of method. The writers of logic seem to be of this opinion: for I know none of them that has followed him closely upon this subject. They have considered the topics of argumentation as reducible to certain axioms. For instance, when the question is about the genus of a thing, it must be determined by some axiom about genus and species; when it is about a definition, it must be determined by some axiom relating to definition, and things defined: and so of other questions. They have therefore reduced the doctrine of the topics to certain axioms or canons, and disposed these axioms in order under certain heads.

This method seems to be more commodious and elegant than that of Aristotle. Yet it must be acknowledged, that Aristotle has furnished the materials from which all the logicians have borrowed their doctrine of topics: and even Cicero,

 Quinctilian,

Quinctilian, and other rhetorical writers, have been much indebted to the Topics of Ariftotle.

He was the firft, as far as I know, who made an attempt of this kind: and in this he acted up to the magnanimity of his own genius, and that of ancient philofophy. Every fubject of human thought had been reduced to ten categories; every thing that can be attributed to any fubject, to five predicables: he attempted to reduce all the forms of reafoning to fixed rules of figure and mode, and to reduce all the topics of argumentation under certain heads; and by that means to collect as it were into one ftore all that can be faid on one fide or the other of every queftion, and to provide a grand arfenal, from which all future combatants might be furnifhed with arms offenfive and defenfive in every caufe, fo as to leave no room to future generations to invent any thing new.

The laft book of the Topics is a code of the laws according to which a fyllogiftical difputation ought to be managed, both on the part of the affailant and defendant. From which it is evident, that this philofopher trained his difciples to contend, not for truth merely, but for victory.

SECT. 3. *Of the book concerning Sophifms.*

A fyllogifm which leads to a falfe conclufion, muft be vicious, either in matter or form: for from true principles nothing but truth can be juftly

justly deduced. If the matter be faulty, that is if either of the premises be false, that premise must be denied by the defendant. If the form be faulty, some rule of syllogism is transgressed; and it is the part of the defendant to shew, what general or special rule it is that is transgressed. So that, if he be an able logician, he will be impregnable in the defence of truth, and may resist all the attacks of the sophist. But as there are syllogisms which may seem to be perfect both in matter and form, when they are not really so, as a piece of money may seem to be good coin when it is adulterate; such fallacious syllogisms are considered in this treatise, in order to make a defendant more expert in the use of his defensive weapons.

And here the author, with his usual magnanimity, attempts to bring all the fallacies that can enter into a syllogism under thirteen heads; of which six lie in the diction or language, and seven not in the diction.

The fallacies in diction are, 1. When an ambiguous word is taken at one time in one sense, and at another time in another. 2. When an ambiguous phrase is taken in the same manner. 3. and 4. are ambiguities in syntax; when words are conjoined in syntax that ought to be disjoined; or disjoined when they ought to be conjoined. 5. Is an ambiguity in prosody, accent, or pronunciation. 6. An ambiguity arising from some figure of speech.

When

When a ſophiſm of any of theſe kinds is tranſlated into another language, or even rendered into unambiguous expreſſions in the ſame language, the fallacy is evident, and the ſyllogiſm appears to have four terms.

The ſeven fallacies which are ſaid not to be in the diction, but in the thing, have their proper names in Greek and in Latin, by which they are diſtinguiſhed. Without minding their names, we ſhall give a brief account of their nature.

1. The firſt is, Taking an accidental conjunction of things for a natural or neceſſary connection: as, when from an accident we infer a property; when from an example we infer a rule; when from a ſingle act we infer a habit.

2. Taking that abſolutely which ought to be taken comparatively, or with a certain limitation. The conſtruction of language often leads into this fallacy: for in all languages, it is common to uſe abſolute terms to ſignify things that carry in them ſome ſecret compariſon; or to uſe unlimited terms, to ſignify what from its nature muſt be limited.

3. Taking that for the cauſe of a thing which is only an occaſion, or concomitant.

4. Begging the queſtion. This is done, when the thing to be proved, or ſome thing equivalent, is aſſumed in the premiſes.

5. Miſtaking the queſtion. When the concluſion of the ſyllogiſm is not the thing that ought

 to

to be proved, but ſomething elſe that is miſtaken for it.

6. When that which is not a conſequence is miſtaken for a conſequence; as if, becauſe all Africans are black, it were taken for granted that all blacks are Africans.

7. The laſt fallacy lies in propoſitions that are complex, and imply two affirmations, whereof one may be true, and the other falſe; ſo that whether you grant the propoſition, or deny it, you are entangled: as when it is affirmed, that ſuch a man has left off playing the fool. If it be granted, it implies, that he did play the fool formerly. If it be denied, it implies, or ſeems to imply, that he plays the fool ſtill.

In this enumeration, we ought, in juſtice to Ariſtotle, to expect only the fallacies incident to categorical ſyllogiſms. And I do not find, that the logicians have made any additions to it when taken in this view; although they have given ſome other fallacies that are incident to ſyllogiſms of the hypothetical kind, particularly the fallacy of an incomplete enumeration in disjunctive ſyllogiſms and dilemmas.

The different ſpecies of ſophiſms above mentioned are not ſo preciſely defined by Ariſtotle, or by ſubſequent logicians, but that they allow of great latitude in the application; and it is often dubious under what particular ſpecies a ſophiſtical ſyllogiſm ought to be claſſed. We even find the ſame example brought under one ſpecies by one author,

author, and under another ſpecies by another. Nay, what is more ſtrange, Ariſtotle himſelf employs a long chapter in proving by a particular induction, that all the ſeven may be brought under that which we have called *miſtaking the queſtion*, and which is commonly called *ignoratio elenchi*. And indeed the proof of this is eaſy, without that laborious detail which Ariſtotle uſes for the purpoſe: for if you lop off from the concluſion of a ſophiſtical ſyllogiſm all that is not ſupported by the premiſes, the concluſion, in that caſe, will always be found different from that which ought to have been proved; and ſo it falls under the *ignoratio elenchi*.

It was probably Ariſtotle's aim, to reduce all the poſſible variety of ſophiſms, as he had attempted to do of juſt ſyllogiſms, to certain definite ſpecies: but he ſeems to be ſenſible that he had fallen ſhort in this laſt attempt. When a genus is properly divided into its ſpecies, the ſpecies ſhould not only, when taken together, exhauſt the whole genus; but every ſpecies ſhould have its own precinct ſo accurately defined, that one ſhall not encroach upon another. And when an individual can be ſaid to belong to two or three different ſpecies, the diviſion is imperfect; yet this is the caſe of Ariſtotle's diviſion of the ſophiſms, by his own acknowledgment. It ought not therefore to be taken for a diviſion ſtrictly logical. It may rather be compared to the ſeveral ſpecies or forms of action invented in law for the redreſs of wrongs.

For every wrong there is a remedy in law by one action or another: but sometimes a man may take his choice among several different actions. So every sophistical syllogism may, by a little art, be brought under one or other of the species mentioned by Aristotle, and very often you may take your choice of two or three.

Besides the enumeration of the various kinds of sophisms, there are many other things in this treatise concerning the art of managing a syllogistical dispute with an antagonist. And indeed, if the passion for this kind of litigation, which reigned for so many ages, should ever again lift up its head, we may predict, that the Organon of Aristotle will then become a fashionable study: for it contains such admirable materials and documents for this art, that it may be said to have brought it to a science.

The conclusion of this treatise ought not to be overlooked: it manifestly relates, not to the present treatise only, but also to the whole analytics and topics of the author. I shall therefore give the substance of it.

" Of those who may be called inventers, some " have made important additions to things long be- " fore begun, and carried on through a course of " ages; others have given a small beginning to " things which, in succeeding times, will be " brought to greater perfection. The beginning " of a thing, though small, is the chief part of it, " and

"and requires the greateſt degree of invention;
"for it is eaſy to make additions to inventions
"once begun. Now with regard to the dialecti-
"cal art, there was not ſomething done, and ſome-
"thing remaining to be done. There was abſo-
"lutely nothing done: for thoſe who profeſſed the
"art of diſputation, had only a ſet of orations com-
"poſed, and of arguments, and of captious que-
"ſtions, which might ſuit many occaſions. Theſe
"their ſcholars ſoon learned, and fitted to the oc-
"caſion. This was not to teach you the art, but
"to furniſh you with the materials produced by
"the art: as if a man profeſſing to teach you the
"art of making ſhoes, ſhould bring you a parcel
"of ſhoes of various ſizes and ſhapes, from which
"you may provide thoſe who want. This may
"have its uſe; but it is not to teach the art of
"making ſhoes. And indeed, with regard to rhe-
"torical declamation, there are many precepts
"handed down from ancient times; but with
"regard to the conſtruction of ſyllogiſms, not
"one.

"We have therefore employed much time and
"labour upon this ſubject; and if our ſyſtem ap-
"pear to you not to be in the number of thoſe
"things, which, being before carried a certain
"length, were left to be perfected; we hope for
"your favourable acceptance of what is done,
"and your indulgence in what is left imper-
"fect."

CHAP. VI.

REFLECTIONS ON THE UTILITY OF LOGIC, AND THE MEANS OF ITS IMPROVEMENT.

SECT. I. *Of the Utility of Logic.*

MEN rarely leave one extreme, without running into the contrary. It is no wonder, therefore, that the exceſſive admiration of Ariſtotle, which continued for ſo many ages, ſhould end in an undue contempt; and that the high eſteem of logic as the grand engine of ſcience, ſhould at laſt make way for too unfavourable an opinion, which ſeems now prevalent, of its being unworthy of a place in a liberal education. Thoſe who think according to the faſhion, as the greateſt part of men do, will be as prone to go into this extreme, as their grandfathers were to go into the contrary.

Laying aſide prejudice, whether faſhionable or unfaſhionable, let us conſider whether logic is, or may be made, ſubſervient to any good purpoſe. Its

Its profeffed end is, to teach men to think, to judge, and to reafon, with precifion and accuracy. No man will fay that this is a matter of no importance; the only thing therefore that admits of doubt, is, whether it can be taught.

To refolve this doubt, it may be obferved, that our rational faculty is the gift of God, given to men in very different meafure. Some have a large portion, fome a lefs; and where there is a remarkable defect of the natural power, it cannot be fupplied by any culture. But this natural power, even where it is the ftrongeft, may lie dead for want of the means of improvement: a favage may have been born with as good faculties as a Bacon or a Newton: but his talent was buried, being never put to ufe; while theirs was cultivated to the beft advantage.

It may likewife be obferved, that the chief mean of improving our rational power, is the vigorous exercife of it, in various ways and in different fubjects, by which the habit is acquired of exercifing it properly. Without fuch exercife, and good fenfe over and above, a man who has ftudied logic all his life, may after all be only a petulant wrangler, without true judgment or fkill of reafoning in any fcience.

I take this to be Locke's meaning, when in his Thoughts on Education he fays, "If you would "have your fon to reafon well, let him read Chil-"lingworth." The ftate of things is much alter-

ed ſince Locke wrote. Logic has been much improved, chiefly by his writings; and yet much leſs ſtreſs is laid upon it, and leſs time conſumed in it. His counſel, therefore, was judicious and ſeaſonable; to wit, That the improvement of our reaſoning power is to be expected much more from an intimate acquaintance with the authors who reaſon the beſt, than from ſtudying voluminous ſyſtems of logic. But if he had meant, that the ſtudy of logic was of no uſe nor deſerved any attention, he ſurely would not have taken the pains to have made ſo conſiderable an addition to it, by his *Eſſay on the Human Underſtanding*, and by his *Thoughts on the Conduct of the Underſtanding*. Nor would he have remitted his pupil to Chillingworth, the acuteſt logician as well as the beſt reaſoner of his age; and one who, in innumerable places of his excellent book, without pedantry even in that pedantic age, makes the happieſt application of the rules of logic, for unravelling the ſophiſtical reaſoning of his antagoniſt.

Our reaſoning power makes no appearance in infancy; but as we grow up, it unfolds itſelf by degrees, like the bud of a tree. When a child firſt draws an inference, or perceives the force of an inference drawn by another, we may call this *the birth of his reaſon;* but it is yet like a new-born babe, weak and tender; it muſt be cheriſhed, carried in arms, and have food of eaſy digeſtion, till it gather ſtrength.

I believe no man remembers the birth of his reafon: but it is probable that his decifions are at firft weak and wavering; and, compared with that fteady conviction which he acquires in ripe years, are like the dawn of the morning compared with noon-day. We fee that the reafon of children yields to authority, as a reed to the wind; nay, that it clings to it, and leans upon it, as if confcious of its own weaknefs.

When reafon acquires fuch ftrength as to ftand on its own bottom, without the aid of authority, or even in oppofition to authority, this may be called its *manly age*. But in moft men, it hardly ever arrives at this period. Many, by their fituation in life, have not the opportunity of cultivating their rational powers. Many, from the habit they have acquired of fubmitting their opinions to the authority of others, or from fome other principle which operates more powerfully than the love of truth, fuffer their judgment to be carried along to the end of their days, either by the authority of a leader, or of a party, or of the multitude, or by their own paffions. Such perfons, however learned, however acute, may be faid to be all their days children in underftanding. They reafon, they difpute, and perhaps write: but it is not that they may find the truth; but that they may defend opinions which have defcended to them by inheritance, or into which they have fallen by accident, or been led by affection.

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I agree with Mr Locke, that there is no ſtudy better fitted to exerciſe and ſtrengthen the reaſoning powers, than that of the mathematical ſciences; for two reaſons; firſt, Becauſe there is no other branch of ſcience which gives ſuch ſcope to long and accurate trains of reaſoning; and, ſecondly, Becauſe in mathematics there is no room for authority, nor for prejudice of any kind, which may give a falſe bias to the judgment.

When a youth of moderate parts begins to ſtudy Euclid, every thing at firſt is new to him. His apprehenſion is unſteady: his judgment is feeble; and reſts partly upon the evidence of the thing, and partly upon the authority of his teacher. But every time he goes over the definitions, the axioms, the elementary propoſitions, more light breaks in upon him: the language becomes familiar, and conveys clear and ſteady conceptions: the judgment is confirmed: he begins to ſee what demonſtration is; and it is impoſſible to ſee it without being charmed with it. He perceives it to be a kind of evidence that has no need of authority to ſtrengthen it. He finds himſelf emancipated from that bondage; and exults ſo much in this new ſtate of independence, that he ſpurns at authority, and would have demonſtration for every thing; until experience teaches him, that this is a kind of evidence that cannot be had in moſt things; and that in his moſt important concerns, he muſt reſt contented with probability.

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As he goes on in mathematics, the road of demonftration becomes fmooth and eafy: he can walk in it firmly, and take wider fteps: and at laft he acquires the habit, not only of underftanding a demonftration, but of difcovering and demonftrating mathematical truths.

Thus, a man, without rules of logic, may acquire a habit of reafoning juftly in mathematics; and, I believe, he may, by like means, acquire a habit of reafoning juftly in mechanics, in jurifprudence, in politics, or in any other fcience. Good fenfe, good examples, and affiduous exercife, may bring a man to reafon juftly and acutely in his own profeffion, without rules.

But if any man think, that from this conceffion he may infer the inutility of logic, he betrays a great want of that art by this inference: for it is no better reafoning than this, That becaufe a man may go from Edinburgh to London by the way of Paris, therefore any other road is ufelefs.

There is perhaps no practical art which may not be acquired, in a very confiderable degree, by example and practice, without reducing it to rules. But practice, joined with rules, may carry a man on in his art farther and more quickly, than practice without rules. Every ingenious artift knows the utility of having his art reduced to rules, and by that means made a fcience. He is thereby enlightened in his practice, and works with more affurance. By rules, he fometimes corrects his own errors,

errors, and often detects the errors of others: he finds them of great ufe to confirm his judgment, to juftify what is right, and to condemn what is wrong.

Is it of no ufe in reafoning, to be well acquainted with the various powers of the human underftanding, by which we reafon? Is it of no ufe, to refolve the various kinds of reafoning into their fimple elements; and to difcover, as far as we are able, the rules by which thefe elements are combined in judging and in reafoning? Is it of no ufe, to mark the various fallacies in reafoning, by which even the moft ingenious men have been led into error? It muft furely betray great want of underftanding, to think thefe things ufelefs or unimportant. Thefe are the things which logicians have attempted; and which they have executed; not indeed fo completely as to leave no room for improvement, but in fuch a manner as to give very confiderable aid to our reafoning powers. That the principles laid down with regard to definition and divifion, with regard to the converfion and oppofition of propofitions and the general rules of reafoning, are not without ufe, is fufficiently apparent from the blunders committed by thofe who difdain any acquaintance with them.

Although the art of categorical fyllogifm is better fitted for fcholaftic litigation, than for real improvement in knowledge, it is a venerable piece of antiquity, and a great effort of human genius. We admire

admire the pyramids of Egypt, and the wall of China, though ufelefs burdens upon the earth. We can bear the moft minute defcription of them, and travel hundreds of leagues to fee them. If any perfon fhould with facrilegious hands deftroy or deface them, his memory would be had in abhorrence. The predicaments and predicables, the rules of fyllogifm, and the topics, have a like title to our veneration as antiquities: they are uncommon efforts, not of human power, but of human genius; and they make a remarkable period in the progrefs of human reafon.

The prejudice againft logic has probably been ftrengthened by its being taught too early in life. Boys are often taught logic as they are taught their creed, when it is an exercife of memory only, without underftanding. One may as well expect to underftand grammar before he can fpeak, as to underftand logic before he can reafon. It muft even be acknowledged, that commonly we are capable of reafoning in mathematics more early than in logic. The objects prefented to the mind in this fcience, are of a very abftract nature, and can be diftinctly conceived only when we are capable of attentive reflection upon the operations of our own underftanding, and after we have been accuftomed to reafon. There may be an elementary logic, level to the capacity of thofe who have been but little exercifed in reafoning; but the moft important parts of this fcience require a ripe under-

ftanding,

ſtanding, capable of reflecting upon its own operations. Therefore to make logic the firſt branch of ſcience that is to be taught, is an old error that ought to be corrected.

SECT. 2. *Of the Improvement of Logic.*

In compoſitions of human thought expreſſed by ſpeech or by writing, whatever is excellent and whatever is faulty, fall within the province, either of grammar, or of rhetoric, or of logic. Propriety of expreſſion is the province of grammar; grace, elegance, and force, in thought and in expreſſion, are the province of rhetoric; juſtneſs and accuracy of thought are the province of logic.

The faults in compoſition, therefore, which fall under the cenſure of logic, are obſcure and indiſtinct conceptions, falſe judgment, inconcluſive reaſoning, and all improprieties in diſtinctions, definitions, diviſion, or method. To aid our rational powers, in avoiding theſe faults and in attaining the oppoſite excellencies, is the end of logic; and whatever there is in it that has no tendency to promote this end, ought to be thrown out.

The rules of logic being of a very abſtract nature, ought to be illuſtrated by a variety of real and ſtriking examples taken from the writings of good authors. It is both inſtructive and entertaining, to obſerve the virtues of accurate compoſition in writers of fame. We cannot ſee them, without being drawn to the imitation of them, in a more powerful

powerful manner than we can be by dry rules. Nor are the faults of ſuch writers, leſs inſtructive or leſs powerful monitors. A wreck, left upon a ſhoal or upon a rock, is not more uſeful to the ſailor, than the faults of good writers, when ſet up to view, are to thoſe who come after them. It was a happy thought in a late ingenious writer of Engliſh grammar, to collect under the ſeveral rules, examples of bad Engliſh found in the moſt approved authors. It were to be wiſhed that the rules of logic were illuſtrated in the ſame manner. By theſe means, a ſyſtem of logic would become a repoſitory; wherein whatever is moſt acute in judging and in reaſoning, whatever is moſt accurate in dividing, diſtinguiſhing, and defining, ſhould be laid up and diſpoſed in order for our imitation; and wherein the falſe ſteps of eminent authors ſhould be recorded for our admonition.

After men had laboured in the ſearch of truth near two thouſand years by the help of ſyllogiſms, Lord Bacon propoſed the method of induction, as a more effectual engine for that purpoſe. His *Novum Organum* gave a new turn to the thoughts and labours of the inquiſitive, more remarkable and more uſeful than that which the *Organum* of Ariſtotle had given before; and may be conſidered as a ſecond grand æra in the progreſs of human reaſon.

The art of ſyllogiſm produced numberleſs diſputes; and numberleſs ſects who fought againſt each

each other with much animofity, without gaining or lofing ground, but did nothing confiderable for the benefit of human life. The art of induction, firft delineated by Lord Bacon, produced numberlefs laboratories and obfervatories; in which Nature has been put to the queftion by thoufands of experiments, and forced to confefs many of her fecrets, that before were hid from mortals. And by thefe, arts have been improved, and human knowledge wonderfully increafed.

In reafoning by fyllogifm, from general principles we defcend to a conclufion virtually contained in them. The procefs of induction is more arduous; being an afcent from particular premifes to a general conclufion. The evidence of fuch general conclufions is probable only, not demonftrative: but when the induction is fufficiently copious, and carried on according to the rules of art, it forces conviction no lefs than demonftration itfelf does.

The greateft part of human knowledge refts upon evidence of this kind. Indeed we can have no other for general truths which are contingent in their nature, and depend upon the will and ordination of the Maker of the world. He governs the world he has made, by general laws. The effects of thefe laws in particular phenomena, are open to our obfervation; and by obferving a train of uniform effects with due caution, we may at laft decypher

decypher the law of nature by which they are regulated.

Lord Bacon has difplayed no lefs force of genius in reducing to rules this method of reafoning, than Ariftotle did in the method of fyllogifm. His *Novum Organum* ought therefore to be held as a moft important addition to the ancient logic. Thofe who underftand it, and enter into its fpirit will be able to diftinguifh the chaff from the wheat in philofophical difquifitions into the works of God. They will learn to hold in due contempt all hypothefes and theories, the creatures of human imagination ; and to refpect nothing but facts fufficiently vouched, or conclufions drawn from them by a fair and chafte interpretation of nature.

Moft arts have been reduced to rules, after they had been brought to a confiderable degree of perfection by the natural fagacity of artifts ; and the rules have been drawn from the beft examples of the art, that had been before exhibited ; but the art of philofophical induction was delineated by Lord Bacon in a very ample manner, before the world had feen any tolerable example of it. This, although it adds greatly to the merit of the author, muft have produced fome obfcurity in the work, and a defect of proper examples for illuftration. This defect may now be eafily fupplied, from thofe authors who, in their philofophical difquifitions, have the moft ftrictly purfued the path pointed out in the *Novum Organum*. Among thefe Sir Ifaac

 Newton

Newton appears to hold the firft rank; having, in the third book of his *Principia* and in his Optics, had the rules of the *Novum Organum* conftantly in his eye.

I think Lord Bacon was alfo the firft who endeavoured to reduce to a fyftem the prejudices or biaffes of the mind, which are the caufes of falfe judgments and which he calls *the idols of the human underftanding*. Some late writers of logic have very properly introduced this into their fyftem; but it deferves to be more copioufly handled, and to be illuftrated by real examples.

It is of great confequence to accurate reafoning, to diftinguifh firft principles which are to be taken for granted, from propofitions which require proof. All the real knowledge of mankind may be divided into two parts: the firft confifting of felf-evident propofitions; the fecond, of thofe which are deduced by juft reafoning from felf-evident propofitions. The line that divides thefe two parts ought to be marked as diftinctly as poffible; and the principles that are felf-evident reduced, as far as can be done, to general axioms. This has been done in mathematics from the beginning, and has tended greatly to the advancement of that fcience. It has lately been done in natural philofophy: and by this means that fcience has advanced more in an hundred and fifty years, than it had done before in two thoufand. Every fcience is in an unformed ftate until its firft principles are afcertain-

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ed: after which, it advances regularly, and secures the ground it has gained.

Although first principles do not admit of direct proof, yet there must be certain marks and characters, by which those that are truly such may be distinguished from counterfeits. These marks ought to be described, and applied, to distinguish the genuine from the spurious.

In the ancient philosophy, there is a redundance, rather than a defect of first principles. Many things were assumed under that character without a just title: That nature abhors a *vacuum*; That bodies do not gravitate in their proper place; That the heavenly bodies undergo no change; That they move in perfect circles, and with an equable motion. Such principles as these were assumed in the Peripatetic philosophy, without proof, as if they were self-evident.

Des Cartes, sensible of this weakness in the ancient philosophy, and desirous to guard against it in his own system, resolved to admit nothing until his assent was forced by irresistible evidence. The first thing that he found to be certain and evident was, that he thought, and reasoned, and doubted. He found himself under a necessity of believing the existence of those mental operations of which he was conscious: and having thus found sure footing in this one principle of consciousness, he rested satisfied with it, hoping to be able to build the whole fabric of his knowledge upon it;

like Archimedes, who wanted but one fixed point to move the whole earth. But the foundation was too narrow; and in his progress he unawares assumes many things less evident than those which he attempts to prove. Although he was not able to suspect the testimony of consciousness; yet he thought the testimony of sense, of memory, and of every other faculty, might be suspected, and ought not to be received until proof was brought that they are not fallacious. Therefore he applies these faculties, whose character is yet in question, to prove, That there is an infinitely perfect Being, who made him, and who made his senses, his memory, his reason, and all his faculties; That this Being is no deceiver, and therefore could not give him faculties that are fallacious; and that on this account they deserve credit.

It is strange, that this philosopher, who found himself under a necessity of yielding to the testimony of consciousness, did not find the same necessity of yielding to the testimony of his senses, his memory, and his understanding: and that while he was certain that he doubted, and reasoned, he was uncertain whether two and three made five, and whether he was dreaming or awake. It is more strange, that so acute a reasoner should not perceive, that his whole train of reasoning to prove that his faculties were not fallacious, was mere sophistry; for if his faculties were fallacious, they might deceive him in this train of reasoning; and

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ſo the concluſion, That they were not fallacious, was only the teſtimony of his faculties in their own favour, and might be a fallacy.

It is difficult to give any reaſon for diſtruſting our other faculties, that will not reach conſciouſneſs itſelf. And he who diſtruſts the faculties of judging and reaſoning which God hath given him, muſt even reſt in his ſcepticiſm, till he come to a ſound mind, or until God give him new faculties to ſit in judgment upon the old. If it be not a firſt principle, That our faculties are not fallacious, we muſt be abſolute ſceptics: for this principle is incapable of proof; and if it is not certain, nothing elſe can be certain.

Since the time of Des Cartes, it has been faſhionable with thoſe who dealt in abſtract philoſophy, to employ their invention in finding philoſophical arguments, either to prove thoſe truths which ought to be received as firſt principles, or to overturn them: and it is not eaſy to ſay, whether the authority of firſt principles is more hurt by the firſt of theſe attempts, or by the laſt: for ſuch principles can ſtand ſecure only upon their own bottom; and to place them upon any other foundation than that of their intrinſic evidence, is in effect to overturn them.

I have lately met with a very ſenſible and judicious treatiſe, wrote by Father Buffier about fifty years ago, concerning firſt principles and the ſource of human judgments, which, with great propriety,

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he prefixed to his treatise of logic. And indeed I apprehend it is a subject of such consequence, that if inquisitive men can be brought to the same unanimity in the first principles of the other sciences, as in those of mathematics and natural philosophy, (and why should we despair of a general agreement in things that are self-evident?), this might be considered as a third grand æra in the progress of human reason.

SKETCH II.

PRINCIPLES AND PROGRESS OF MORALITY.

THE principles of morality are little understood among savages: and if they arrive at maturity among enlightened nations, it is by slow degrees. This progress points out the historical part, as first in order; but as that history would give little satisfaction, without a rule for comparing the morals of different ages, and of different nations, I begin with the principles of morality, such as ought to govern at all times, and in all nations. The present sketch accordingly is divided into two parts. In the first, the principles are unfolded; and the second is altogether historical.

PART

PART I.

PRINCIPLES OF MORALITY.

SECT. I.

Human actions analyfed.

THE hand of God is no where more vifible, than in the nice adjuftment of our internal frame to our fituation in this world. An animal is endued with a power of felf-motion; and in performing animal functions, requires no external aid. This in particular is the cafe of man, the nobleft of terreftrial beings. His heart beats, his blood circulates, his ftomach digefts, &c. &c. By what means? Not furely by the laws of mechanifm, which are far from being adequate to fuch operations. They are effects of an internal power, beftowed on man for preferving life. The power is exerted uniformly, and without interruption, independent of will, and without confcioufnefs.

Man is a being fufceptible of pleafure and pain: thefe generate defire to attain what is agreeable, and to fhun what is difagreeable; and he is poffeffed of other powers which enable him to gratify his defires. One power, termed *inftinct*, is exerted indeed with confcioufnefs; but without will, and confequently without defiring or intending to produce any effect. Brute animals act for the moft part by inftinct: hunger prompts them to eat, and cold to take fhelter; knowingly indeed, but with-

out exerting any act of will, and without foresight of what will happen. Infants of the human species are, like brutes, governed by instinct: they apply to the nipple, without knowing that sucking will satisfy their hunger; and they weep when pained, without any view of relief. But men commonly are governed by desire and intention. In the progress from infancy to maturity, the mind opens to objects without end, agreeable and disagreeable, which raise in us a desire to attain the former and avoid the latter. The will is influenced by desire; and the actions thus performed are termed *voluntary*.

But to have an accurate conception of human nature, it is necessary to be more particular. To incline, to intend, to consent, to resolve, to will, are acts of the mind preparatory to external action. These several acts are well understood, though they cannot be defined, being perfectly simple. As every act implies a power to act, the acts mentioned must be the effects of mental powers. The mind cannot determine without having a power to determine, nor will without having a power to will.

Instinctive actions are exerted without any previous desire or motive, and without any previous act of will. Actions influenced by desire or motives are very different. In such actions, will is essential to connect the desire or motive with the external act. A man who desires or is moved to perform an external act in view, must have a power to determine

termine himself: that power is termed *will*; and the determination is an act of will. With respect to external acts influenced by desire, we cannot even move a finger, without a previous act of will directing that motion. We are very sensible of this determination or act of will, when we deliberate upon motives that tend to different ends. The mind for some time is suspended; deliberates, and at last determines according to the strongest motive. But there must also be a determination where there is but a single motive, though not so perceptible. Being called to dinner when hungry, I instantly obey the call. I cannot go to dinner without first determining to rise from my seat. And it is this determination that entitles it to be called a voluntary act, as much as where the determination is the result of the most anxious deliberation.

Some effects require a train of actions; walking, reading, singing. Where these actions are uniform, as in walking, or nearly so, as in playing on a musical instrument, an act of will is only necessary at the commencement: the train proceeds by habit without any new act of will. The body is antecedently adjusted to the uniform progress; and is disturbed if any thing unexpected happen: in walking, for example, a man feels a shock if he happen to tread on ground higher or lower than his body was prepared for. The power thus acquired by habit of acting without will, is an illustrious

luſtrious branch of our nature; for upon it depend all the arts, both the fine and the uſeful. To play on the violin, requires wonderful ſwiftneſs of fingers, every motion of which in a learner is preceded by an act of will: and yet by habit ſolely, an artiſt moves his fingers with no leſs accuracy than celerity. Let the moſt handy perſon try for the firſt time to knit a ſtocking: every motion of the needle demands the ſtricteſt attention; and yet a girl of nine or ten will move the needle ſo ſwiftly as almoſt to eſcape the eye without once looking on her work. If every motion in the arts required a new act of will, they would remain in infancy for ever; and what would man be in that caſe? In the foregoing inſtances, we are conſcious of the external operation without being conſcious of a cauſe. But there are various internal operations of which we have no conſciouſneſs; and yet that they have exiſted is made known by their effects. Often have I gone to bed with a confuſed notion of what I was ſtudying; and have awaked in the morning completely maſter of the ſubject. I have heard a new tune of which I carried away but an imperfect conception. A week or perhaps a fortnight after, the tune has occurred to me in perfection; recollecting with difficulty where I heard it. Such things have happened to me frequently, and probably alſo to others. My mind muſt have been active in theſe inſtances, though I knew nothing of it.

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There still remains another species of actions, termed *involuntary*. Strictly speaking, every action influenced by a motive is *voluntary*, because no such action can be done but by an antecedent act of will. But in a less strict sense, actions done contrary to desire are termed *involuntary*; and they have more or less of that character according to the strength of the motive. A man to free himself from torture, reveals the secrets of his party: his confession is in a degree involuntary, being extorted from him with great reluctance. But let us suppose, that after the firmest resolution to reveal nothing, his mind is unhinged by exquisite torture: the discovery he makes is in the highest degree *involuntary*.

Man is by his nature an accountable being, answerable for his conduct to God and man. In doing any action that wears a double face, he is prompted by his nature to explain the same to his relations, his friends, his acquaintance; and above all, to those who have authority over him. He hopes for praise for every right action, and dreads blame for every one that is wrong. But for what sort of actions does he hold himself accountable? Not surely for an instinctive action, which is done blindly, without intention and without will: neither for an involuntary action, because it is extorted from him reluctantly, and contrary to his desire; and least of all, for actions done without consciousness. What only remain are voluntary actions proceeding from desire, which are done as we say

wittingly

wittingly and willingly: for these we must account, if at all accountable; and for these every man in conscience holds himself bound to account.

Further upon voluntary actions. To intend and to will, though commonly held synonymous, signify different acts of the mind. Intention respects the effect: Will respects the action that is exerted for producing the effect. It is my intention, for example, to relieve my friend from distress: upon seeing him, it is my will to give him a sum for his relief: the external act of giving follows; and my friend is relieved, which is the effect intended. But these internal acts are always united: I cannot will the means, without intending the effect; and I cannot intend the effect, without willing the means.

Some effects of voluntary action follow necessarily: A wound is an effect that necessarily follows the stabbing a person with a dagger: death is a necessary effect of throwing one down from the battlements of a high tower. Some effects are probable only: I labour in order to provide for my family; fight for my country to rescue it from oppressors; take physic for my health. In such cases, the event intended does not necessarily nor always follow.

A man, when he wills to act, must intend the necessary effect: a person who stabs, certainly intends to wound. But where the effect is probable

only,

only, one may act without intending the effect that follows: a stone thrown by me at random into the market-place, may happen to wound a man without my intending it. One acts by instinct, without either will or intention: voluntary actions, that necessarily produce their effect, imply intention: voluntary actions, when the effect is probable only, are sometimes intended, sometimes not.

Human actions are distinguished from each other by certain *qualities*, termed *right* and *wrong*. But as these make the corner-stone of morality, they are reserved to the following section.

SECT. III.

DIVISION OF HUMAN ACTIONS INTO RIGHT, WRONG, AND INDIFFERENT.

THE qualities of right and wrong in voluntary actions, are universally acknowledged as the foundation of morality; and yet philosophers have been strangely perplexed about them. The history of their various opinions, would signify little but to darken the subject: the reader will have more satisfaction in seeing these qualities explained, without entering at all into controversy.

No person is ignorant of primary and secondary qualities, a distinction much insisted on by philosophers. Primary qualities, such as figure, cohesion, weight, are permanent qualities, that exist in a subject

subject, whether perceived or not. Secondary qualities, such as colour, taste, smell, depend on the percipient as much as on the subject, being nothing when not perceived. Beauty and ugliness are qualities of the latter sort: they have no existence but when perceived; and, like all other secondary qualities, they are perceived intuitively; having no dependence on reason nor on judgement, more than colour has, or smell, or taste *.

The qualities of right and wrong in voluntary actions, are secondary, like beauty and ugliness and the other secondary qualities mentioned. Like them, they are objects of intuitive perception, and depend not in any degree on reason. No argument is requisite to prove, that to rescue an innocent babe from the jaws of a wolf, to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, are right actions: they are perceived to be so intuitively. As little is an argument requisite to prove, that murder, deceit, perjury, are wrong actions: they are perceived to be so intuitively. The Deity has bestowed on man different faculties for different purposes. Truth and falsehood are investigated by the reasoning faculty. Beauty and ugliness are objects of a sense, known by the name of *taste*. Right and wrong are objects of a sense termed the *moral sense* or *conscience*. And supposing these qualities to be hid from our perception, in vain would we try

* Elements of Criticism, vol. 1. p. 207. edit. 5.

try to discover them by any argument or process of reasoning: the attempt would be absurd; no less so than an attempt to discover by reasoning colour, or taste, or smell *.

Right and wrong, as mentioned above, are qualities of voluntary actions, and of no other kind. An instinctive action may be agreeable, may be disagreeable; but it cannot properly be denominated either right or wrong. An involuntary act is hurtful to the agent, and disagreeable to the spectator; but it is neither right nor wrong. These qualities also depend in no degree on the event. Thus, if to save my friend from drowning I plunge into a river, the action is right, though I happen to come too late. And if I aim a stroke at a man behind his back, the action is wrong, though I happen not to touch him.

The qualities of right and of agreeable, are inseparable;

* Every perception must proceed from some faculty or power of perception, termed *sense*. The moral sense, by which we perceive the qualities of right and wrong, may be considered either as a branch of the sense of seeing, by which we perceive the actions to which these qualities belong, or as a sense distinct from all others. The senses by which objects are perceived, are not separated from each other by distinct boundaries: the sorting or classing them, seems to depend more on taste and fancy, than on nature. I have followed the plan laid down by former writers; which is, to consider the moral sense as a sense distinct from others, because it is the easiest and clearest manner of conceiving it.

feparable; and fo are the qualities of wrong and of difagreeable. A right action is agreeable, not only in the direct perception, but equally fo in every fubfequent recollection. And in both circumftances equally, a wrong action is difagreeable.

Right actions are diftinguifhed by the moral fenfe into two kinds, what *ought* to be done, and what *may* be done, or left undone. Wrong actions admit not that diftinction: they are all prohibited to be done. To fay that an action ought to be done, means that we are tied or obliged to perform; and to fay that an action ought not to be done, means that we are reftrained from doing it. Though the neceffity implied in the being tied or obliged, is not phyfical, but only what is commonly termed *moral;* yet we conceive ourfelves deprived of liberty or freedom, and neceffarily bound to act or to forbear acting, in oppofition to every other motive. The neceffity here defcribed is termed *duty*. The moral neceffity we are under to forbear harming the innocent, is a proper example: the moral fenfe declares the reftraint to be our duty, which no motive whatever will excufe us for tranfgreffing.

The duty of performing or forbearing any action, implies a *right* in fome perfon to exact performance of that duty; and accordingly, a duty or obligation neceffarily infers a correfponding right. My promife to pay L. 100 to John, confers a right on him to demand performance. The man

man who commits an injury, violates the *right* of the perſon injured; which entitles that perſon to demand reparation of the wrong.

Duty is twofold; duty to others, and duty to ourſelves. With reſpect to the former, the doing what we ought to do, is termed *juſt*: the doing what we ought not to do, and the omitting what we ought to do, are termed *unjuſt*. With reſpect to ourſelves, the doing what we ought to do, is termed *proper*: the doing what we ought not to do, and the omitting what we ought to do, are termed *improper*. Thus, *right*, ſignifying a quality of certain actions, is a genus; of which *juſt* and *proper* are ſpecies: *wrong* ſignifying a quality of other actions, is a genus; of which *unjuſt* and *improper* are ſpecies.

Right actions left to our free will, to be done or left undone, come next in order. They are, like the former, right when done; but they differ, in not being wrong when left undone. To remit a juſt debt for the ſake of a growing family, to yield a ſubject in controverſy rather than go to law with a neighbour, generouſly to return good for ill, are examples of this ſpecies. They are univerſally approved as right actions: but as no perſon has a right or title to oblige us to perform ſuch actions, the leaving them undone is not a wrong: no perſon is injured by the forbearance. Actions that come under this claſs, ſhall be termed

 arbitrary

arbitrary or *difcretionary*, for want of a more proper defignation.

So much for right actions, and their divifions. Wrong actions are of two kinds, *criminal* and *culpable*. What are done intentionally to produce mifchief, are *criminal:* rafh or ungarded actions that produce mifchief without intention, are *culpable*. The former are reftrained by punifhment, to be handled in the 5th fection; the latter by reparation, to be handled in the 6th.

The divifions of voluntary actions are not yet exhaufted. Some there are that, properly fpeaking, cannot be denominated either right or wrong. Actions done merely for amufement or paftime, without intention to produce good or ill, are of that kind; leaping, for example, running, jumping over a ftick, throwing a ftone to make circles in the water. Such actions are neither approved nor difapproved: they may be termed *indifferent*.

There is no caufe for doubting the exiftence of the moral fenfe, more than for doubting the exiftence of the fenfe of beauty, of feeing, or of hearing. In fact, the perception of right and wrong as qualities of actions, is no lefs diftinct and clear, than that of beauty, of colour, or of any other quality; and as every perception is an act of fenfe, the fenfe of beauty is not with greater certainty evinced from the perception of beauty, than the moral fenfe is from the perception of right and wrong.

wrong. We find this ſenſe diſtributed among individuals in different degrees of perfection: but there perhaps never exiſted any one above the condition of an idiot, who poſſeſſed it not in ſome degree; and were any man entirely deſtitute of it, the terms *right* and *wrong* would be to him no leſs unintelligible, than the term colour is to one born blind.

That every individual is endued with a ſenſe of right and wrong, more or leſs diſtinct, will probably be granted; but whether there be among men what may be termed a *common ſenſe* of right and wrong, producing uniformity of opinion as to right and wrong, is not ſo evident. There is no abſurdity in ſuppoſing the opinions of men about right and wrong, to be as various as about beauty and deformity. And that the ſuppoſition is not deſtitute of foundation, we are led to ſuſpect, upon diſcovering that in different countries, and even in the ſame country at different times, the opinions publicly eſpouſed with regard to right and wrong, are extremely various; that among ſome nations it was held lawful for a man to ſell his children for ſlaves, and in their infancy to abandon them to wild beaſts; that it was held equally lawful to puniſh children, even capitally, for the crime of their parent; that the murdering an enemy in cold blod, was once a common practice; that human ſacrifices, impious no leſs than immoral according to our notions, were of

old univerfal; that even in later times, it has been held meritorious, to inflict cruel torments for the flighteft deviations from the religious creed of the plurality; and that among the moft enlightened nations, there are at this day confiderable differences with refpect to the rules of morality.

Thefe facts tend not to difprove the reality of a common fenfe in morals: they only prove, that the moral fenfe has not been equally perfect at all times, nor in all countries. This branch of the hiftory of morality, is referved for the fecond part. To give fome interim fatisfaction, I fhall fhortly obferve, that the favage ftate is the infancy of man; during which, the more delicate fenfes lie dormant, leaving nations to the authority of cuftom, of imitation, and of paffion, without any juft tafte of morals more than of the fine arts. But a nation, like an individual, ripens gradually, and acquires a refined tafte in morals as well as in the fine arts: after which we find great uniformity of opinion about the rules of right and wrong; with few exceptions, but what may proceed from imbecillity, or corrupted education. There may be found, it is true, even in the moft enlightened ages, men who have fingular notions in morality, and in many other fubjects; which no more affords an argument againft a common fenfe or ftandard of right and wrong, than a monfter doth againft the ftandard that regulates our external form, or than an

exception

exception doth against the truth of a general proposition.

That there is in mankind an uniformity of opinion with respect to right and wrong, is a matter of fact of which the only infallible evidence is observation and experience: and to that evidence I appeal; entering only a caveat, that, for the reason above given, the inquiry may be confined to enlightened nations. In the mean time, I take liberty to suggest an argument from analogy, That if there be great uniformity among the different tribes of men in seeing and hearing, in pleasure and pain, in judging of truth and error, the same uniformity ought to be expected with respect to right and wrong. Whatever minute differences there may be to distinguish one person from another, yet in the general principles that constitute our nature, internal and external, there is wonderful uniformity.

This uniformity of sentiment, which may be termed *the common sense of mankind with respect to right and wrong*, is essential to social beings. Did the moral sentiments of men differ as much as their faces, they would be unfit for society: discord and controversy would be endless, and *major vis* would be the only rule of right and wrong.

But such uniformity of sentiment, though general, is not altogether universal: men there are, as above mentioned, who differ from the common sense of mankind with respect to various points of

 morality.

morality. What ought to be the conduct of such men; ought they to regulate their conduct by that standard, or by their private conviction? There will be occasion afterward to observe, that we judge of others as we believe they judge of themselves; and that private conviction is the standard for rewards and punishments *. But with respect to every controversy about property and pecuniary interest, and, in general, about every civil right and obligation, the common sense of mankind is to every individual the standard, and not private conviction or conscience; for proof of which take what follows.

We have an innate sense of a common nature, not only in our own species, but in every species of animals. And that our perception holds true in fact, is verified by experience; for there appears a remarkable uniformity in creatures of the same kind, and a deformity, no less remarkable, in creatures of different kinds. It is accordingly a subject of wonder to find an individual deviating from the common nature of the species, whether in its internal or external structure: a child born with aversion to its mother's milk, is a wonder, no less than if born without a mouth, or with more than one.

Secondly, this sense dictates, that the common nature of man in particular, is invariable as well as universal; that it will be the same hereafter as it

* Sect. 5.

it is at present, and as it was in time past; the same among all nations, and in all corners of the earth: nor are we deceived, because, allowing for slight differences occasioned by culture and other accidental circumstances, the fact corresponds to our perception.

Thirdly, We perceive that this common nature is *right* and *perfect*, and that it *ought* to be a model or standard for every human being. Any remarkable deviation from it in the structure of an individual, appears imperfect or irregular; and raises a painful emotion: a monstrous birth, exciting curiosity in a philosopher, fails not at the same time to excite aversion in every spectator.

This sense of perfection in the common nature of man, comprehends every branch of his nature, and particularly the common sense of right and wrong; which accordingly is perceived by all to be perfect, having authority over every individual as the ultimate and unerring standard of morals, even in contradiction to private conviction. Thus, a law in our nature binds us to regulate our conduct by that standard: and its authority is universally acknowledged; as nothing is more ordinary in every dispute about *meum et tuum*, than an appeal to common sense as the ultimate and unerring standard.

At the same time, as that standard, through infirmity or prejudice, is not conspicuous to every individual; many are misled into erroneous opi-

nions, by miſtaking a falſe ſtandard for that of nature. And hence a diſtinction between a right and a wrong ſenſe in morals; a diſtinction which every one underſtands, but which, unleſs for the conviction of a moral ſtandard, would have no meaning.

The final cauſe of this branch of our Nature is conſpicuous. Were there no ſtandard of right and wrong for determining endleſs controverſies about matters of intereſt, the ſtrong would have recourſe to force, the weak to cunning, and ſociety would diſſolve. Courts of law could afford no remedy; for without a ſtandard of morals, their deciſions would be arbitrary, and of no authority. Happy it is for men to be provided with ſuch a ſtandard: it is neceſſary in ſociety that our actions be uniform with reſpect to right and wrong; and in order to uniformity of action, it is neceſſary that our perceptions of right and wrong be alſo uniform: to produce ſuch uniformity, a ſtandard of morals is indiſpenſable. Nature has provided us with that ſtandard, which is daily applied by courts of law with ſucceſs *.

In reviewing what is ſaid, it muſt afford great ſatisfaction, to find morality eſtabliſhed upon the ſolid foundations of intuitive perception; which is a ſingle mental act complete in itſelf, having no dependence on any antecedent propoſition. The moſt accurate reaſoning affords not equal convic-

tion;

* See Elements of Criticiſm, vol. ii. p. 490. edit. 5.

tion; for every ſort of reaſoning, as explained in the ſketch immediately foregoing, requires not only ſelf-evident truths or axioms to found upon, but employs over and above various propoſitions to bring out its concluſions. By intuitive perception ſolely, without reaſoning, we acquire knowledge of right and wrong; of what we may do, of what we ought to do, and of what we ought to abſtain from: and conſidering that we have thus greater certainty of moral laws than of any propoſition diſcoverable by reaſoning, man may well be deemed a favourite of Heaven, when he is ſo admirably qualified for doing his duty. The moral ſenſe or conſcience is the voice of God within us; conſtantly admoniſhing us of our duty, and requiring from us no exerciſe of our faculties but attention merely. The celebrated Locke ventured what he thought a bold conjecture, That moral duties are ſuſceptible of demonſtration: how agreeable to him would have been the diſcovery, that they are founded upon intuitive perception, ſtill more convincing and authoritative!

By one branch of the moral ſenſe, we are taught what we ought to do; and what we ought not to do; and by another branch, what we may do, or leave undone. But ſociety would be imperfect, if the moral ſenſe ſtopped here. There is a third branch that makes us accountable for our conduct to our fellow-creatures; and it will be made evident afterward in the third ſketch, that we are accountable

accountable to our Maker, as well as to our fellow-creatures.

It follows from the ſtandard of right and wrong, that an action is right or wrong, independent of what the agent may think. Thus, when a man, excited by friendſhip or pity, reſcues a heretic from the flames, the action is right, even though he think it wrong, from a conviction that heretics ought to be burnt. But we apply a different ſtandard to the agent: a man is approved and held to be innocent in doing what he himſelf thinks right: he is diſapproved and held to be guilty in doing what he himſelf thinks wrong. Thus, to aſſaſſinate an atheiſt for the ſake of religion, is a wrong action; and yet the enthuſiaſt who commits that wrong, may be innocent: and one is guilty, who againſt conſcience eats meat in Lent, though the action is not wrong. In ſhort, an action is perceived to be right or wrong, independent of the actor's own opinion: but he is approved or diſapproved, held to be innocent or guilty, according to his own opinion.

SECT. III.

Laws of Nature reſpecting our Moral Conduct in Society.

A Standard being thus eſtabliſhed for regulating our moral conduct in ſociety, we proceed to inveſtigate the laws that reſult from it.

But

But first we take under consideration, what other principles concur with the moral sense to qualify men for society.

When we reflect on the different branches of human knowledge, it might seem, that of all subjects human nature should be the best understood; because every man has daily opportunities to study it, in his own passions and in his own actions. But human nature, an interesting subject, is seldom left to the investigation of philosophy. Writers of a sweet disposition and warm imagination, hold, that man is a benevolent being, and that every man ought to direct his conduct for the good of all, without regarding himself but as one of the number *. Those of a cold temperament and contracted mind, hold him to be an animal entirely selfish; to evince which, examples are accumulated without end †. Neither of these systems is that of nature. The selfish system is contradicted by the experience of all ages, affording the clearest evidence, that men frequently act for the sake of others, without regarding themselves, and sometimes in direct opposition to their own interest ‡. And

* Lord Shaftesbury. † Helvetius.

‡ Whatever wiredrawn arguments may be urged for the selfish system, as if benevolence were but refined selfishness, the emptiness of such arguments will clearly appear when applied to children, who know no refinement. In them, the rudiments of the social principle are no less visible than of the selfish

And however much ſelfiſhneſs may prevail in action; man cannot be an animal entirely ſelfiſh, when all men conſpire to put a high eſtimation upon generoſity, benevolence, and other ſocial virtues: even the moſt ſelfiſh are diſguſted with ſelfiſhneſs in others, and endeavour to hide it in themſelves. The moſt zealous patron of the ſelfiſh principle, will not venture to maintain, that it renders us altogether indifferent about our fellow-creatures. Laying aſide ſelf-intereſt with every connection of love and hatred, good fortune happening to any one gives pleaſure to all, and bad fortune happening to any one is painful to all. On the other hand, the ſyſtem of univerſal benevolence, is no leſs contradictory to experience; from which we learn, that men commonly are diſpoſed to prefer their own intereſt before that of others, eſpecially where there is no ſtrict connection: nor do we find that ſuch bias is condemned by the moral ſenſe. Man in fact is a complex being, compoſed of principles, ſome benevolent, ſome ſelfiſh: and theſe principles are ſo juſtly blended in his nature, as to fit him for acting a proper part in ſociety. It would indeed be loſing time to prove, that without ſome affection for his fellow-creatures, he would be ill qualified for

ſelfiſh principle. Nothing is more common, than mutual good-will and fondneſs between children: which muſt be the work of nature; for to reflect upon what is one's intereſt, is far above the capacity of children.

for ſociety. And it will be made evident afterward *, that univerſal benevolence would be more hurtful to ſociety, than even abſolute ſelfiſhneſs †.

We are now prepared for inveſtigating the laws that reſult from the foregoing principles. The ſeveral duties we owe to others ſhall be firſt diſcuſſed; taking them in order according to the extent of their influence. And for the ſake of perſpicuity, I ſhall firſt preſent them in a general view, and then proceed to particulars. Of our duties to others, one there is ſo extenſive, as to have for its object all the innocent part of mankind. It is the duty that prohibits us to hurt others: than which no law is more clearly dictated by the moral ſenſe; nor is the tranſgreſſion of any other law more deeply ſtamped with the character of wrong. A man may be hurt externally

* Sect. 4.

† "Many moraliſts enter ſo deeply into one paſſion or bias "of human nature, that, to uſe the painter's phraſe, they "quite overcharge it. Thus I have ſeen a whole ſyſtem of "morals founded upon a ſingle pillar of the inward frame; "and the entire conduct of life and all the characters in it "accounted for, ſometimes from ſuperſtition, ſometimes from "pride, and moſt commonly from intereſt. They forget "how various a creature it is they are painting; how many "ſprings and weights, nicely adjuſted and balanced, enter "into the movement, and require allowance to be made for "their ſeveral clogs and impulſes, ere you can define its ope-"ration and effects." *Enquiry into the life and writings of Homer.*

nally in his goods, in his perſon, in his relations, and in his reputation. Hence the laws, Do not ſteal; Defraud not others; Do not kill nor wound; Be not guilty of defamation. A man may be hurt internally, by an action that occaſions to him diſtreſs of mind, or by being impreſſed with falſe notions of men and things. Therefore conſcience dictates, that we ought not to treat men diſreſpectfully; that we ought not cauſeleſsly to alienate their affections from others; and, in general, that we ought to forbear whatever may tend to break their peace of mind, or tend to unqualify them for being good men and good citizens.

The duties mentioned are duties of reſtraint. Our active duties regard particular perſons; ſuch as our relations, our friends, our benefactors, our maſters, our ſervants. It is our duty to honour and obey our parents; and to eſtabliſh our children in the world, with all advantages internal and external: we ought to be faithful to our friends, grateful to our benefactors, ſubmiſſive to our maſters, kind to our ſervants; and to aid and comfort every one of theſe perſons when in diſtreſs. To be obliged to do good to others beyond theſe bounds, muſt depend on poſitive engagement; for, as will appear afterward, univerſal benevolence is not a duty.

This general ſketch will prepare us for particulars. The duty of reſtraint comes firſt in view, that

that which bars us from harming the innocent; and to it corresponds a right in the innocent to be safe from harm. This is the great law preparatory to society; because without it, society could never have existed. Here the moral sense is inflexible: it dictates, that we ought to submit to any distress, even death itself, rather than procure our own safety by laying violent hands upon an innocent person. And we are under the same restraint with respect to the property of another; for robbery and theft are never upon any pretext indulged. It is indeed true, that in extreme hunger I may lawfully take food where it can be found; and may freely lay hold of my neighbour's horse, to carry me from an enemy who threatens death. But it is his duty as a fellow-creature to assist me in distress; and when there is no time for delay, I may lawfully use what he ought to offer were he present, and what I may presume he would offer. For the same reason, if in a storm my ship be driven among the anchor-ropes of another ship, I may lawfully cut the ropes to get free. But in every case of this kind, it would be a wrong in me to use my neighbour's property, without resolving to pay the value. If my neighbour be bound to aid me in distress, conscience binds me to make up his loss *.

The

* This doctrine is obviously founded on justice; and yet, in the Roman law, there are two passages which deny any recompence in such cases. "Item Labeo scribit, si cum "vi

The prohibition of hurting others internally, is perhaps not essential to the formation of societies, because

" vi ventorum navis impulsa esset in funes anchorarum
" alterius, et nautæ funes præcidissent; si nullo alio modo,
" nisi præcisis funibus, explicare se potuit, nullam actio-
" nem dandam;" *l.* 29. § 3. *ad leg. Aquil.* " Quod dici-
" tur *damnum injuria datum Aquilia persequi,* sic erit ac-
" cipiendum, ut videatur damnum injuria datum quod cum
" damno injuriam attulerit; nisi magna vi cogente, fuerit
" factum. Ut Celsus scribit circa eum, qui incendii ar-
" cendi gratia vicinas ædes intercidit; et sive pervenit ig-
" nis, sive antea extinctus est, existimat legis Aquiliæ ac-
" tionem cessare;" *l.* 49. § 1. *eod.* — [*In English thus:*
" In the opinion of Labeo, if a ship is driven by the vio-
" lence of a tempest among the anchor-ropes of another
" ship, and the sailors cut the ropes, having no other means
" of getting free, there is no action competent.—The A-
" quilian law must be understood to apply only to such da-
" mage as carries the idea of an injury along with it, un-
" less such injury has not been wilfully done, but from
" necessity. Thus Celsus puts the case of a person who,
" to stop the progress of a fire, pulls down his neighbour's
" house; and whether the fire had reached that house
" which is pulled down, or was extinguished before it got
" to it, in neither case, he thinks, will an action be com-
" petent from the Aquilian law."]—These opinions are undoubtedly erroneous. And it is not difficult to say what has occasioned the error: the cases mentioned are treated as belonging to the *lex Aquilia;* which being confined to the reparation of wrongs, lays it justly down for a rule, That no action for reparation can lie, where there is no

because the tranfgreffion of that law doth not much alarm plain people: but where manners and refined fentiments prevail, the mind is fufceptible of more grievous wounds than the body; and therefore, without that law, a polifhed fociety could have no long endurance.

By adultery, mifchief is done both external and internal. Each fex is fo conftituted, as to require ftrict fidelity and attachment in a mate. The breach of thefe duties is the greateft external harm that can befal them: it harms them alfo internally, by breaking their peace of mind. It has indeed been urged, that no harm will enfue, if the adultery be kept fecret; and confequently, that there can be no crime where the fact is kept fecret. But fuch as reafon thus do not advert, that to declare fecret adultery to be lawful, is in effect to overturn every foundation of mutual truft and fidelity in the matrimonial ftate. It is clear beyond all doubt, fays a reputable writer, that no man is permitted to violate his faith; and that the man is unjuft and barbarous who deprives his wife of the only reward fhe has for adhering to the auftere duties of her fex. But an unfaithful

no *culpa*. But had Labeo and Celfus adverted, that thefe cafes belong to a different head, viz. the duty of recompence, where one fuffers lofs by benefiting another, they themfelves would have no difficulty of fuftaining a claim or making up that lofs.

wife is ſtill more criminal, by diſſolving the whole ties of nature: in giving to her huſband children that are not his, ſhe betrays both, and joins perfidy to infidelity. *

Veracity is commonly ranked among the active duties; but erroneouſly: for if a man be not bound to ſpeak, he cannot be bound to ſpeak truth. It is therefore only a reſtraining duty, prohibiting us to deceive others, by affirming what is not true. Among the many correſponding principles in the human mind that in conjunction tend to make ſociety comfortable, a principle of veracity †, and a principle that leads us to rely on human teſtimony, are two: without the latter, the former would be an uſeleſs principle; and without the former, the latter would lay us open to fraud and treachery. The moral ſenſe accordingly dictates, that we ought

* Emile, liv. 5.

† Truth is always uppermoſt, being the natural iſſue of the mind: it requires no art nor training, no inducement nor temptation, but only that we yield to natural impulſe. Lying, on the contrary, is doing violence to our nature; and is never practiſed, even by the worſt of men, without ſome temptation. Speaking truth is like uſing our natural food, which we would do from appetite although it anſwered no end: lying is like taking phyſic, which is nauſeous to the taſte, and which no man takes but for ſome end which he cannot otherwiſe attain. *Dr Reid's Inquiry into the human mind.*

ought to adhere ſtrictly to truth, without regard to conſequences.

It muſt not be inferred, that we are bound to explain our thoughts, when truth is demanded from us by unlawful means. Words uttered voluntarily, are naturally relied on, as expreſſing the ſpeaker's mind; and if his mind differ from his words, he tells a lie, and is guilty of deceit. But words drawn from a man by torture, are no indication of his mind; and he is not guilty of deceit in uttering whatever words may be agreeable, however alien from his thoughts: if the author of the unlawful violence ſuffer himſelf to be deceived, he ought to blame himſelf, not the ſpeaker.

It need ſcarce be mentioned, that the duty of veracity excludes not fable, nor any liberty of ſpeech intended for amuſement only.

Active duties, as hinted above, are all of them directed to particular perſons. And the firſt I ſhall mention, is that between parent and child. The relation of parent and child, the ſtrongeſt that can exiſt between individuals, binds theſe perſons to exert their utmoſt powers in mutual good offices. Benevolence among other blood-relations, is alſo a duty; but not ſo indiſpenſable, being proportioned to the inferior degree of relation.

Gratitude is a duty directed to our benefactors. But though gratitude is ſtrictly a duty, the meaſure of performance, and the kind, are left moſtly to our own choice. It is ſcarce neceſſary to add,

 that

To fulfil a rational promiſe or covenant, deliberately made, is a duty no leſs inflexible than thoſe duties are which ariſe independent of conſent. But as man is fallible, often miſled by ignorance, and liable to be deceived, his condition would be deplorable, did the moral ſenſe compel him to fulfil every engagement, however imprudent or irrational. Here the moral ſenſe gives way to human infirmity: it relieves from deceit, from impoſition, from ignorance, from error; and binds a man by no engagement but what anſwers the end fairly intended. There is ſtill leſs doubt that it will relieve us from an engagement extorted by external violence, or by overbearing paſſion. The dread of torture will force moſt men to ſubmit to any terms; and a man in imminent hazard of drowning, will voluntarily promiſe all he has in the world to ſave him. The moral ſenſe would be ill ſuited to the imbecillity of our nature, did it bind men in conſcience to fulfil engagements made in ſuch circumſtances.

The other branch of duties, thoſe we owe to ourſelves, ſhall be diſcuſſed in a few words. *Propriety*, a branch of the moral ſenſe, regulates our conduct with reſpect to ourſelves; as *Juſtice*, another branch of the moral ſenſe, regulates our conduct with reſpect to others. Propriety dictates, that we ought to act up to the dignity of our nature, and to the ſtation allotted us by Providence: it dictates in particular, that temperance, prudence, modeſty,

modefty, and uniformity of conduct, are felf-duties. Thefe duties contribute to private happinefs, by preferving health, peace of mind, and felf-efteem; which are ineftimable bleffings: they contribute no lefs to happinefs in fociety, by gaining the love and efteem of others, and aid and fupport in time of need.

Upon reviewing the foregoing duties refpecting others, we find them more or lefs extenfive; but none fo extenfive as to have for their end the good of mankind in general. The moft extenfive duty is that of reftraint, prohibiting us to harm others: but even that duty has a limited end; for its purpofe is only to protect others from mifchief, not to do them any pofitive good. The active duties of doing pofitive good are circumfcribed within ftill narrower bounds, requiring fome relation that connects us with others; fuch as thofe of parent, child, friend, benefactor. The flighter relations, unlefs in peculiar circumftances, are not the foundation of any active duty: neighbourhood, for example, does not alone make benevolence a duty: but fuppofing a neighbour to be in diftrefs, relief becomes our duty, if it can be done without diftrefs to ourfelves. The duty of relieving from diftrefs, feldom goes farther; for though we always fympathize with our relations, and with thofe under our eye, the diftreffes of the remote and unknown affect us very little. Pactions and agreements become neceffary, if we would extend the duty of benevo-

lence beyond the limits mentioned. Men, it is true, are capable of doing more good than is required of them as a duty; but every ſuch good muſt be a free-will offering.

And this leads to arbitrary or diſcretionary actions, ſuch as may be done or left undone; which make the ſecond general head of moral actions. With reſpect to theſe, the moral ſenſe leaves us at freedom: a benevolent act is approved, but the omiſſion is not condemned. This holds ſtrictly in ſingle acts; but in viewing the whole of a man's conduct, the moral ſenſe appears to vary a little. As the nature of man is complex, partly ſocial, partly ſelfiſh, we have an intuitive perception, that our conduct ought to be conformable to our nature; and that in advancing our own intereſt, we ought not altogether to neglect that of others. The man accordingly who confines his whole time and thoughts within his own little ſphere, is condemned by all the world as guilty of wrong conduct; and the man himſelf, if his moral perceptions be not blunted by ſelfiſhneſs, muſt be ſenſible that he deſerves to be condemned. On the other hand, it is poſſible that free benevolence may be extended beyond proper bounds: where it prevails, it commonly leads to exceſs, by prompting a man to ſacrifice a great intereſt of his own to a ſmall intereſt of others; and the moral ſenſe dictates, that ſuch conduct is wrong. The juſt

temperament,

temperament, is a ſubordination of benevolence to ſelf-love.

Thus, moral actions are divided into two claſſes: the firſt regards our duty, containing actions that ought to be done, and actions that ought not to be done; the other regards arbitrary or diſcretionary actions, containing actions that are right when done, but not wrong when left undone. Society is indeed promoted by the latter; but it can ſcarce ſubſiſt, unleſs the former be made our duty. Hence it is, that actions only of the firſt claſs are made indiſpenſable; thoſe of the other claſs being left to our free-will. And hence alſo it is, that the various propenſities that diſpoſe us to actions of the firſt claſs, are diſtinguiſhed by the name of *primary virtues*; leaving the name of *ſecondary virtues* to thoſe propenſities which diſpoſe us to actions of the other claſs *.

The deduction above given makes it evident, that the general tendency of right actions is to promote the good of ſociety, and of wrong actions, to obſtruct that good. Univerſal benevolence is indeed not required of man; becauſe to put it in practice, is beyond his utmoſt abilities. But for promoting the general good, every thing is

* Virtue ſignifies that diſpoſition of mind which gives the aſcendant to moral principles. Vice ſignifies that diſpoſition of mind which gives little or no aſcendant to moral principles.

is required of him that he can accomplish ; which will appear from reviewing the foregoing duties. The prohibition of harming others is an easy task ; and upon that account is made universal. Our active duties are very different : man is circumscribed both in capacity and power : he cannot do good but in a slow succession ; and therefore it is wisely ordered, that his obligation to do good should be confined to his relations, his friends, his benefactors. Even distress makes not benevolence a general duty : all a man can readily do, is to relieve those at hand ; and accordingly we hear of distant misfortunes with little or no concern.

But let not the moral system be misapprehended, as if it were our duty, or even lawful, to prosecute what upon the whole we reckon the most beneficial to society, balancing ill with good. The moral sense permits not a violation of any person's right, however trivial, whatever benefit may thereby accrue to another. A man for example in low circumstances, by denying a debt he owes to a rich miser, saves himself and a hopeful family from ruin. In that case, the good effect far outweighs the ill, or rather has no counterbalance : but the moral sense permits not the debtor to balance ill with good ; nor gives countenance to an unjust act, whatever benefit it may produce. And hence a maxim in which all moralists agree, That we must

must not do ill to bring about good; the final cause of which shall be given below *.

SECT. IV.

Principles of Duty and of Benevolence.

HAVING thus shortly delineated the moral laws of our nature, we proceed to an article of great importance, which is, to inquire into the means provided by our Maker for compelling obedience to these laws. The moral sense is an unerring guide; but the most expert guide will not profit those who are not disposed to be led. This consideration makes it evident, that to complete the moral system, man ought to be endued with some principle or propensity, some impulsive power, to enforce obedience to the laws dictated by the moral sense.

The author of our nature leaves none of his works imperfect. In order to render us obsequious to the moral sense as our guide, he hath implanted in our nature the principles of duty, of benevolence, of rewards and punishments, and of reparation. It may possibly be thought, that rewards and punishments, of which afterward, are sufficient of themselves to enforce the laws of nature, without necessity of any other principle. Human

* Sect. 7.

Human laws, it is true, are enforced by these means; becaufe no higher fanction is under command of a terreftrial legiflator. But the celeftial legiflator, with power that knows no control, and benevolence that knows no bounds, hath enforced his laws by means no lefs remarkable for mildnefs than for efficacy: he employs no external compulfion; but, in order to engage our will on the right fide, hath in the breaft of individuals eftablifhed the principles of duty and of benevolence, which efficacioufly excite them to obey the dictates of the moral fenfe.

The reftraining and active duties being both of them effential to fociety, our Maker has wifely ordered, that the principle which enforces thefe duties, fhould be the moft cogent of all that belong to our nature. Other principles may folicit, allure, or terrify; but the principle of duty affumes authority, commands, and infifts to be obeyed, without giving ear to any oppofing motive.

As one great purpofe of fociety, is to furnifh opportunities of mutual aid and fupport; nature feconding that purpofe, hath provided the principle of benevolence, which excites us to be kindly, beneficent, and generous. Nor ought it to efcape obfervation, that the author of nature, attentive to our wants and to our well-being, hath endued us with a liberal portion of that principle. It excites us to be kind, not only to thofe we are connected with, but to our neighbours, and even to thofe

thofe we are barely acquainted with. Providence is peculiarly attentive to objects in diftrefs, who require immediate aid and relief. To the principle of benevolence, it hath fuperadded the paffion of pity, which in every feeling heart is irrefiftible. To make benevolence more extenfive, would be fruitlefs; becaufe here are objects in plenty to fill the moft capacious mind. It would not be fruitlefs only, but hurtful to fociety: I fay hurtful; becaufe frequent difappointments in attempting to gratify our benevolence, would render it a troublefome gueft, and make us cling rather to felfifhnefs, which we can always gratify. At the fame time, though there is not room for a more extenfive lift of particular objects, yet the faculty we have of uniting numberlefs individuals into one complex object, enlarges greatly the fphere of benevolence. By that faculty, our country, our government, our religion, become objects of public fpirit, and of a lively affection. The individuals that compofe the group, confidered apart, may be too minute, or too diftant, for our benevolence: but when united into one whole, accumulation makes them great, greatnefs makes them confpicuous; and affection, preferved entire and undivided, is beftowed upon an abftract object, as upon one that is fingle and vifible; but with energy proportioned to its greater dignity and importance. Thus the principle of benevolence is not too fparingly fcattered among men. It is indeed made fubordinate to felf-intereft,

reſt, which is wiſely ordered, as will afterwards be made evident*: but its power and extent are nicely proportioned to the limited capacity of man, and to his ſituation in this world; ſo as better to fulfil its deſtination, than if it were an overmatch for ſelf-intereſt, and for every other principle.

SECT. V.

Laws reſpecting Rewards and Puniſhments.

Reflecting on the moral branch of our nature qualifying us for ſociety in a manner ſuited to our capacity, we cannot overlook the hand of our Maker; for means ſo finely adjuſted to an important end, never happen by chance. It muſt however be acknowledged, that in many individuals, the principle of duty has not vigour nor authority ſufficient to ſtem every tide of unruly paſſion: by the vigilance of ſome paſſions, we are taken unguarded; deluded by the ſly inſinuations of others; or overwhelmed with the ſtormy impetuoſity of a third ſort. Moral evil is thus introduced, and much wrong is done. This new ſcene ſuggeſts to us, that there muſt be ſome article ſtill wanting to complete the moral ſyſtem; ſome means for redreſſing ſuch wrongs, and for preventing

* Sect. 7.

preventing the reiteration of them. To accomplish these important ends, there are added to the moral system, laws relative to rewards and punishments, and to reparation; of which in their order.

Many animals are qualified for society by instinct merely; such as beavers, sheep, monkeys, bees, rooks. But men are seldom led by instinct: their actions are commonly prompted by passions; of which there is an endless variety, social and selfish, benevolent and malevolent. And were every passion equally entitled to gratification, man would be utterly unqualified for society: he would be a ship without a rudder, obedient to every wind, and moving at random without any ultimate destination. The faculty of reason would make no opposition; for were there no sense of wrong, it would be reasonable to gratify every desire that harms not ourselves: and to talk of punishment would be absurd; for punishment, in its very idea, implies some wrong that ought to be redressed. Hence the necessity of the moral sense, to qualify us for society: by instructing us in our duty, it renders us accountable for our conduct, and makes us susceptible of rewards and punishments. The moral sense fulfils another valuable purpose: it erects in man an unerring standard for the application and measure of rewards and punishments.

To complete the ſyſtem of rewards and puniſhments, it is neceſſary that a proviſion be made, both of power and of willingneſs to reward and puniſh. The Author of our nature hath provided amply for the former, by entitling every man to reward and puniſh as his native privilege. And he has provided for the latter, by a noted principle in our nature, prompting us to exerciſe the power. Impelled by that principle, we reward the virtuous with approbation and eſteem, and puniſh the vicious with diſapprobation and contempt. And there is an additional motive for exerciſing that principle, which is, that we have great ſatisfaction in rewarding, and no leſs in puniſhing.

As to puniſhment in particular, an action done intentionally to produce miſchief, is criminal, and merits puniſhment. Such an action, being diſagreeable, raiſes my reſentment, even where I have no connection with the perſon injured; and the principle mentioned impels me to chaſtiſe the delinquent with indignation and hatred. An injury done to myſelf raiſes my reſentment to a higher tone: I am not ſatisfied with ſo ſlight a puniſhment as indignation and hatred: the author muſt by my hand ſuffer miſchief, as great as he has made me ſuffer.

Even the moſt ſecret crime eſcapes not puniſhment. The delinquent is tortured with remorſe: he even deſires to be puniſhed, ſometimes ſo ardently

dently as to punish himself*. There cannot be imagined a contrivance more effectual to deter one from

* Mr. John Kello, minister of Spot, in East Lothian, had an extraordinary talent for preaching, and was universally held a man of singular piety. His wife was handsome, cheerful, tender-hearted, and in a word possessed all the qualities that can endear a woman to her husband. A pious and rich widow in the neighbourhood tempted his avarice. She clung to him as a spiritual guide; and but for his little wife, he had no doubt of obtaining her in marriage. He turned gradually peevish and discontented. His change of behaviour made a deep impression on his wife, for she loved him dearly; and yet she was anxious to conceal her treatment from the world. Her meekness, her submission, her patience, tended but to increase his sullenness. Upon a Sunday morning, when on her knees, she was offering up her devotions, he came softly behind her, put a rope about her neck, and hung her up to the ceiling. He bolted his gate, creeped out at a window, walked demurely to church, and charmed his hearers with a most pathetic sermon. After divine service, he invited two or three of his neighbours to pass the evening, at his house, telling them that his wife was indisposed, and of late inclined to melancholy; but that she would be glad to see them. It surprised them to find the gate bolted, and none to answer: much more when, upon its being forced open, they found her in the posture mentioned. The husband seemed to be struck dumb; and counterfeited sorrow so much to the life, that his guests, forgetting the deceased, were wholly interested about the living. His feigned tears, however, became real: his soul was oppressed with the weight of his guilt. Finding no relief from agonizing remorse, and from the image of

from vice, than remorſe, which itſelf is a grievous puniſhment. Self-puniſhment goes ſtill farther: every criminal, ſenſible that he ought to be puniſhed, dreads puniſhment from others; and this dread, however ſmothered during proſperity, breaks out in adverſity, or in depreſſion of mind: his crime ſtares him in the face, and every accidental misfortune is in his diſturbed imagination interpreted to be a puniſhment: "And they ſaid one "to another, We are very guilty concerning our "brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his ſoul, "when he beſought us; and we would not hear: "therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us. And "Reuben anſwered them, ſaying, Spake I not unto you, ſaying, Do not ſin againſt the child? "and ye would not hear; therefore behold alſo "his blood is required * †."

The

of his murdered wife conſtantly haunting him, he about ſix weeks after the horrid deed went to Edinburgh, and delivered himſelf up to juſtice. He was condemned upon his own confeſſion, and executed 4th October 1570.

* Geneſis xlii. 21.

† John, Duke of Britany, commonly termed *the Good Duke*, illuſtrious for generoſity, clemency, and piety, reigned forty-three years, wholly employed about the good of his ſubjects. He was ſucceeded by his eldeſt ſon Francis, a prince weak and ſuſpicious, and conſequently liable to be miſled by favourites. Arthur of Montauban, in love with the wife of Gilles, brother

The Usurper, Oliver Cromwell, found to his dire experience, that the grandeur which he had attained with so much cunning and courage, did not contribute to his happiness; for with happiness

 guilt

ther to the Duke, persuaded the Duke that his brother was laying plots to dethrone him. Gilles being imprisoned, the Duke's best friends conjured him to pity his unhappy brother, who might be imprudent, but assuredly was innocent;—all in vain. Gilles being prosecuted before the three estates of the province for high-treason, was unanimously absolved; which irritated the Duke more and more. Arthur of Montauban artfully suggested to his master to try poison; which having miscarried, they next resolved to starve the prisoner to death. The unfortunate Prince, through the bars of a window, cried aloud for bread; but the passengers durst not supply him. One poor woman only had courage more than once to slip some bread within the window. He charged a priest, who had received his confession, to declare to the Duke, "That seeing "justice was refused him in this world, he appealed to Heaven; "and called upon the Duke to appear before the judgment-"seat of God in forty days." The Duke and his favourite, amazed that the Prince lived so long without nourishment, employed assassins to smother him with his bed-clothes. The priest, in obedience to the orders he had received, presented himself before the Duke, and with a loud voice cited him in name of the deceased Lord Gilles to appear before God in forty days. Shame and remorse verified the prediction. The Duke was seized with a sudden terror; and the image of his brother, expiring by his orders, haunted him day and night. He decayed daily without any marks of a regular disease, and died within the forty days in frightful agony.

See this subject further illustrated in the Sketch, *Principles and Progress of Theology*, chap. 1.

guilt is inconſiſtent. Conſcious that he deſerved puniſhment for his crimes, and dreading its being inflicted upon him, all around appeared to him treacherous friends or bitter enemies. Death, which with intrepidity he had braved in the field, was now timorouſly apprehended from aſſaſſins. With a piercing and anxious eye he ſurveyed every new face. He wore armour under his clothes, and never moved a ſtep without his guards. Seldom he ſlept three nights together in the ſame chamber; nor in any but what had a back-door, at which centinels were placed. Society terrified him by reflecting on his unknown enemies, numerous and implacable. Solitude aſtoniſhed him by leaving him without protection. Can all the glory and power that this earth can afford be a counterbalance for ſuch miſery?

No tranſgreſſion of ſelf-duty eſcapes puniſhment, more than tranſgreſſion of duty to others. The puniſhments, though not the ſame, differ in degree more than in kind. Injuſtice is puniſhed with remorſe: impropriety with ſhame, which is remorſe in a lower degree. Injuſtice raiſes indignation in the beholder, and ſo doth every flagrant impropriety: ſlighter improprieties receive a milder puniſhment, being rebuked with ſome degree of contempt, and commonly with deriſion *.

So

* See Elements of Criticiſm, chap. 10.

So far we have been led in a beaten track; but in attempting to proceed, we are entangled in mazes and intricacies. An action well intended may happen to produce no good; and an action ill intended may happen to produce no mischief: a man overawed by fear, may be led to do mischief against his will; and a person, mistaking the standard of right and wrong, may be innocently led to do acts of injustice. By what rule, in such cases, are rewards and punishments to be applied? Ought a man to be rewarded when he does no good, or punished when he does no mischief; ought he to be punished for doing mischief against his will, or for doing mischief when he thinks he is acting innocently? These questions suggest a doubt, whether the standard of right and wrong be applicable to rewards and punishments.

We have seen that there is an invariable standard of right and wrong, which depends not in any degree on private opinion or conviction. By that standard, all pecuniary claims are judged, all claims of property, and, in a word, every demand founded on interest, not excepting reparation, as will afterward appear. But with respect to the moral characters of men, and with respect to rewards and punishments, a different standard is erected in the common sense of mankind, neither rigid nor inflexible; which is, the opinion that men have of their own actions. It is mentioned above, that a man is esteemed innocent in doing what he himself thinks right, and guilty in doing

what he himself thinks wrong. In applying this standard to rewards and punishments, we reward those who in doing wrong are however convinced that they are innocent; and punish those who in doing right are however convinced that they are guilty *. Some, it is true, are so perverted by improper education or by superstition, as to espouse numberless absurd tenets, contradictory to the standard of right and wrong; and yet such men are no exception from the general rule: if they act according to conscience, they are innocent, and safe against punishment however wrong the action may be; and if they act against conscience, they are guilty and punishable however right the action may be: it is abhorrent to every moral perception, that a guilty person be rewarded, or an innocent person punished. Further, if mischief be done contrary to will, as where a man is compelled by fear or by torture, to reveal the secrets of his party; he may be grieved for yielding to the weakness of his nature, contrary to his firmest resolves; but he has no check of conscience, and upon that account is not liable to punishment. And lastly, in order that personal merit and demerit may not in any measure depend on chance, we

* Virtuous and vicious, innocent and guilty, signify qualities both of men and of their actions. Approbation and disapprobation, praise and blame, signify certain emotions or sentiments of those who see or contemplate men and their actions.

we are ſo conſtituted as to place innocence and guilt, not on the event, but on the intention of doing right or wrong; and accordingly, whatever be the event, a man is praiſed for an action well-intended, and condemned for an action ill-intended.

But what if a man intending a certain wrong happen by accident to do a wrong he did not intend; as, for example, intending to rob a warren by ſhooting the rabbits, he accidentally wounds a child unſeen behind a buſh? The delinquent ought to be puniſhed for intending to rob; and he is alſo ſubjected to repair the hurt done to the child: but he cannot be puniſhed for the accidental wound; becauſe our nature regulates puniſhment by the intention, and not by the event *.

 A

* During the infancy of nations, pecuniary compoſitions for crimes were univerſal; and during that long period, very little weight was laid upon intention. This proceeded from the cloudineſs and obſcurity of moral perceptions among barbarians, making no diſtinction between reparation and pecuniary puniſhment. Where a man does miſchief intentionally, or is *verſans in illicito*, as expreſſed in the Roman law, he is juſtly bound to repair all the harm that enſues, however accidentally; and from the reſemblance of pecuniary puniſhment to reparation, the rule was childiſhly extended to puniſhment. But this rule, ſo little conſiſtent with moral principles, could not long ſubſiſt after pecuniary compoſitions gave place to corporal puniſhment; and accordingly, among civilized nations, the law of nature is reſtored, which prohibits puniſhment for any miſchief that is not intentional.

The

A crime against any primary virtue is attended with severe and never-failing punishment, more efficacious than any that have been invented to enforce municipal laws: on the other hand, the preserving primary virtues inviolate, is attended with little merit. The secondary virtues are directly opposite: the neglecting them is not attended with any punishment; but the practice of them is attended with illustrious rewards. Offices of undeserved kindness, returns of good for ill, generous toils and sufferings for our friends or for our country, are attended with consciousness of self-merit, and with universal praise and admiration;

* The English must be excepted, who, remarkably tenacious of their original laws and customs, preserve in force, even as to capital punishment, the above-mentioned rule that obtained among barbarians, when pecuniary compositions were in vigour. The following passage is from Hales, (Pleas of the Crown, chap. 39.) "Regularly he that voluntarily and "knowingly intends hurt to the person of a man, as for example to beat him, though he intend not death, yet if death "ensues, it excuseth not from the guilt of murder, or man-"slaughter at least, as the circumstances of the case happen." And Foster, in his Crown law, teaches the same doctrine, never once suspecting in it the least deviation from moral principles. "A shooteth at the poultry of B, and by accident "killeth a man: if his intention was to steal the poultry, "which must be collected from circumstances, it will be mur-"der, by reason of that felonious intent; but if it was done "wantonly and without that intention, it will be barely man-"slaughter." (P. 259.)

ration; the higheſt rewards a generous mind is ſuſceptible of.

From what is ſaid, the following obſervation will occur: The pain of tranſgreſſing juſtice, fidelity, or any duty, is much greater than the pleaſure of performing: but the pain of neglecting a generous action, or any ſecondary virtue, is as nothing compared with the pleaſure of performing. Among the vices oppoſite to the primary virtues, the moſt ſtriking moral deformity is found; among the ſecondary virtues, the moſt ſtriking moral beauty.

SECT. VI.

Laws reſpecting Reparation.

THE principle of reparation is made a branch of the moral ſyſtem for accompliſhing two ends: which are, to repreſs wrongs that are not criminal, and to make up the loſs ſuſtained by wrongs of whatever kind. With reſpect to the former, reparation is a ſpecies of puniſhment: with reſpect to the latter, it is an act of juſtice. Theſe ends will be better underſtood, after aſcertaining the nature and foundation of reparation; to which the following diviſion of actions is neceſſary. Firſt, actions that we are bound to perform. Second, actions that we perform in proſe-

cution

cution of a right or privilege. Third, indifferent actions, defcribed above. Actions of the firft kind fubject not a man to reparation, whatever damage enfues; becaufe it is his duty to perform them; and it would be inconfiftent with morality that a man fhould be fubjected to reparation for doing his duty. The laws of reparation that concern actions of the fecond kind, are more complex. The focial ftate, highly beneficial by affording opportunity for mutual good offices, is attended with fome inconveniences; as where a perfon happens to be in a fituation of neceffarily harming others by exercifing a right or privilege. If the forefight of harming another reftrain me not from exercifing my right, the intereft of that other is made fubfervient to mine: on the other hand, if fuch forefight reftrain me from exercifing my right, my intereft is made fubfervient to his. What doth the moral fenfe provide in that cafe? To preferve as far as poffible an equality among perfons born free and by nature equal in rank, the moral fenfe dictates a rule, no lefs beautiful than falutary; which is, That the exercifing a right will not juftify me for doing direct mifchief; but will juftify me, though I forefee that mifchief may poffibly happen. The firft branch of the rule refolves into a propofition eftablifhed above, That no intereft of mine, not even life itfelf, will authorife me to hurt an innocent perfon. The other branch is fupported by expediency: for if the

the bare possibility of hurting others were sufficient to restrain a man from prosecuting his rights and privileges; men would be too much cramped in action, or rather would be reduced to a state of absolute inactivity. With respect to the first branch, I am criminal, and liable even to punishment: with respect to the other, I am not even culpable, nor bound to repair the mischief that happens to ensue. But this proposition admits a temperament, which is, that if any danger be foreseen, I am in some degree culpable, if I be not at due pains to prevent it. For example, where in pulling down an old house I happen to wound one passing accidentally, without calling aloud to beware.

With respect to indifferent actions, the moral sense dictates, that we ought carefully to avoid doing mischief, either direct or consequential. As we suffer no loss by forbearing actions that are done for pastime merely, such an action is *culpable* or *faulty*, if the consequent mischief was foreseen or might have been foreseen; and the actor of course is subjected to reparation. As this is a cardinal point in the doctrine of reparation, I shall endeavour to explain it more fully. Without intending any harm, a man may foresee, that what he is about to do will probably or possibly produce mischief; and sometimes mischief follows that was neither intended nor foreseen. The action in the former case is not criminal; because ill

ill intention is essential to a crime; but it is culpable or faulty; and if mischief ensue, the actor blames himself, and is blamed by others, for having done what he ought not to have done. Thus, a man who throws a large stone among a crowd of people, is highly culpable; because he must foresee that mischief will probably ensue, though he has no intention to hurt any person. As to the latter case, though mischief was neither intended nor foreseen, yet if it might have been foreseen, the action is rash or uncatious, and consequently culpable or faulty in some degree. Thus, if a man, shooting at a mark for recreation near a high road, happen to wound one passing accidentally, without calling aloud to keep out of the way, the action is in some degree culpable, because the mischief might have been foreseen. But though mischief ensue, an action is not culpable or faulty if all reasonable precaution have been adhibited: the moral sense declares the author to be innocent * and blameless: the mischief is accidental; and the action may be termed *unlucky*, but comes not under the denomination of either right or wrong. In general, when we act merely for amusement, our nature makes us answerable for the harm that ensues, if it was either foreseen or might

* *Innocent* here is opposed to *culpable*: in a broader sense it is opposed to *criminal*. With respect to punishment, an action though culpable is innocent, if it be not criminal: with respect to reparation, it is not innocent if it be culpable.

might with due attention have been foreseen. But our rights and privileges would profit us little, if their exercise were put under the same restraint; it is more wisely ordered, that the probability of mischief, even foreseen, should not restrain a man from prosecuting his concerns, which may often be of consequence to him; provided that he act with due precaution. He proceeds accordingly with a safe conscience, and is not afraid of being blamed either by God or man.

With respect to rash or uncautious actions, where the mischief might have been foreseen though not actually foreseen; it is not sufficient to escape blame, that a man, naturally rash or inattentive, acts according to his character: a degree of precaution is required, both by himself and by others, such as is natural to the generality of men: he perceives that he might and *ought* to have acted more cautiously; and his conscience reproaches him for his inattention, no less than if he were naturally more sedate and attentive. Thus the circumspection natural to mankind in general, is applied as a standard to every individual; and if a man fall short of that standard, he is culpable and blameable, however unforeseen by him the mischief may have been.

What is said upon culpable actions, is equally applicable to culpable omissions; for by these also mischief may be occasioned, entitling the sufferer to reparation. If we forbear to do our duty with

an intention to occafion mifchief, the forbearance is criminal. The only queftion is, how far forbearance without fuch intention is culpable: fuppofing the probability of mifchief to have been forefeen, though not intended, the omiffion is highly culpable; and though neither intended nor forefeen, yet the omiffion is culpable in a lower degree, if there have been lefs care and attention than are proper in performing the duty required. But fuppofing all due care, the omiffion of extreme care and diligence is not culpable *.

By afcertaining what acts and omiffions are culpable or faulty, the doctrine of reparation is rendered extremely fimple; for it may be laid down as a rule without a fingle exception, That every culpable act, and every culpable omiffion, binds us in confcience to repair the mifchief occafioned by it. The moral fenfe binds us no farther; for it loads not with reparation the man who is blamelefs and innocent: the harm is accidental; and we are

* *Culpa lata æquiparatur dolo*, fays the Roman law. They are equal with refpect to reparation and to every civil confequence; but they are certainly not equal in a criminal view. The effence of a crime confifts in the intention to do mifchief; upon which account no fault or *culpa*, however grofs, amounts to a crime. But may not grofs negligence be a fubject of punifhment? A jailor fees a ftate-prifoner taking fteps to make his efcape; and yet will not give himfelf the trouble to prevent it; and fo the prifoner efcapes. Damages cannot be qualified, becaufe no perfon is hurt; and if the jailor cannot be punifhed, he efcapes free.

are ſo conſtituted as not to be reſponſible in conſcience for what happens by accident. But here it is requiſite, that the man be in every reſpect innocent: for if he intend harm, though not what he has done, he will find himſelf bound in conſcience to repair the accidental harm he has done; as, for example, when aiming a blow unjuſtly at one in the dark, he happens to wound another whom he did not ſuſpect to be there. And hence it is a rule in all municipal laws, That one *verſans in illicito* is liable to repair every conſequent damage. That theſe particulars are wiſely ordered by the Author of our nature for the good of ſociety, will appear afterward *. In general, the rules above mentioned are dictated by the moral ſenſe; and we are compelled to obey them by the principle of reparation.

We are now prepared for a more particular inſpection of the two ends of reparation above mentioned, The repreſſing wrongs that are not criminal, and the making up what loſs is ſuſtained by wrongs of whatever kind. With reſpect to the firſt, it is clear, that puniſhment in its proper ſenſe cannot be inflicted for a wrong that is culpable only; and if nature did not provide ſome means for repreſſing ſuch wrongs, ſociety would ſcarce be a comfortable ſtate. Laying conſcience aſide, pecuniary reparation is the only remedy that can be provided againſt culpable omiſſions: and with reſpect

* Sect. 7.

ſpect to culpable commiſſions, the neceſſity of reparation is ſtill more apparent; for conſcience alone, without the ſanction of reparation, would ſeldom have authority ſufficient to reſtrain us from acting raſhly or uncautiouſly, even where the poſſibility of miſchief is foreſeen, and far leſs where it is not foreſeen.

With reſpect to the ſecond end of reparation, my conſcience dictates to me, that if a man ſuffer by my fault, whether the miſchief was foreſeen or not foreſeen, it is my duty to make up his loſs; and I perceive intuitively, that the loſs ought to reſt ultimately upon me, and not upon the ſufferer, who has not been culpable in any degree.

In every caſe where the miſchief done can be eſtimated by a pecuniary compenſation, the two ends of reparation coincide. The ſum is taken from the one as a ſort of puniſhment for his fault, and is beſtowed on the other to make up the loſs he has ſuſtained. But in numberleſs caſes where miſchief done cannot be compenſated with money, reparation is in its nature a ſort of puniſhment. Defamation, contemptuous treatment, perſonal reſtraint, the breaking one's peace of mind, are injuries that cannot be repaired with money; and the pecuniary reparation decreed againſt the wrong-doer, can only be conſidered as a puniſhment inflicted in order to deter him from reiterating ſuch injuries: the ſum, it is true, is awarded to the perſon injured; but not as ſufficient to make

up

up his loss, which money cannot do, but only as a *solatium* for what he has suffered.

Hitherto it is supposed, that the man who intends a wrong action, is at the same time conscious of its being so. But a man may intend a wrong action, thinking erroneously that it is right; or a right action, thinking erroneously that it is wrong; and the question is, What shall be the consequence of such errors with respect to reparation. The latter case is clear: the person who occasionally suffers loss by a right action, has not a claim for reparation, because he has no just cause of complaint. On the other hand, if the action be wrong, the innocence of the author, for which he is indebted to an error in judgment, will not relieve him from reparation. When he is made sensible of his error, he feels himself bound in conscience to repair the harm he has done by a wrong action: and others, sensible of his error from the beginning, have the same feeling; nor will his obstinacy in resisting conviction, nor his dulness in not apprehending his error, mend the matter: it is well that these defects relieve him from punishment, without wronging others by denying a claim for reparation. A man's errors ought to affect himself only, and not those who have not erred. Hence in general, reparation always follows wrong; and is not affected by any erroneous opinion of a wrong action being right, more than of a right action being wrong.

But this doctrine suffers an exception with respect to one who, having undertaken a trust, is bound in duty to act. A judge is in that state: it is his duty to pronounce sentence in every case that comes before him; and if he judge according to his knowledge, he is not liable for consequences. A judge cannot be subjected to reparation, unless the judgment he gave was intentionally wrong. An officer of the revenue is in the same predicament. Led by a doubtful clause in a statute, he makes a seizure of goods as forfeited to the crown, which afterward, in the proper court, are found not to be seizable: he ought not to be subjected to reparation, if he have acted to the best of his judgment. This rule however must be taken with a limitation: a public officer who is grossly ignorant, will not be excused; for he ought to know better.

Reparation is due, though the immediate act be involuntary, provided it be connected with a preceding voluntary act. Example: "If A ride an "unruly horse in Lincolns-Inn Fields, to tame him, "and the horse breaking from A, run over B and "grievously hurt him; B shall have an action "against A: for though the mischief was done "against the will of A, yet since it was his fault "to bring a wild horse into a frequented place "where mischief might ensue, he must answer for "the consequences." Gaius seems to carry this rule still farther, holding in general, that if a horse, by

by the weakneſs or unſkilfulneſs of the rider, break away and do miſchief, the rider is liable *. But Gaius probably had in his eye a frequented place, where the miſchief might have been foreſeen. Thus in general, a man is made liable for the miſchief occaſioned by his voluntary deed, though the immediate act that occaſioned the miſchief be involuntary.

SECT. VII.

Final Cauſes of the foregoing Laws of Nature.

SEVERAL final cauſes have been already mentioned, which could not conveniently be reſerved for the preſent ſection, being neceſſary for explaining the ſubjects to which they relate; the final cauſe for inſtance of erecting a ſtandard of morals upon the common ſenſe of mankind. I proceed now to what have not been mentioned, or but ſlightly mentioned.

The final cauſe that preſents itſelf firſt to view, reſpects man conſidered as an accountable being. The ſenſe of being accountable, is one of our moſt vigilant guards againſt the ſilent attacks of vice. When a temptation moves me it immediately occurs, What will the world ſay? I imagine my friends expoſtulating, my enemies reviling—it

* L. 8. § 1. ad leg. Aquil.

would be in vain to dissemble—my spirits sink—the temptation vanishes. 2dly, Praise and blame, especially from those we regard, are strong incentives to virtue: but if we were not accountable for our conduct, praise and blame would seldom be well directed; for how shall a man's intentions be known, without calling him to account? And praise or blame, frequently ill-directed, would lose their influence. 3dly, This branch of our nature, is the corner-stone of the criminal law. Did not a man think himself accountable to all the world, and to his judge in a peculiar manner, it would be natural for him to think, that the justest sentence pronounced against him, is oppression, not justice. 4thly, It promotes society. If we were not accountable beings, those connected by blood, or by country, would be no less shy and reserved, than if they were utter strangers to each other.

The final cause that next occurs, being simple and obvious, is mentioned only that it may not seem to have been overlooked. All right actions are agreeable, all wrong actions, disagreeable. This is a wise appointment of Providence. We meet with so many temptations against duty, that it is not always easy to persevere in the right path: would we persevere, were duty disagreeable? And were acts of pure benevolence disagreeable, they would be rare, however worthy of praise.

Another final cause respects duty, in contradistinction to pure benevolence. All the moral laws are

are founded on intuitive perception; and are so simple and plain, as to be perfectly apprehended by the most ignorant. Were they in any degree complex or obscure, they would be perverted by selfishness and prejudice. No conviction inferior to what is afforded by intuitive perception, could produce in mankind a common sense in moral duties. Reason would afford no general conviction; because that faculty is distributed in portions so unequal, as to bar all hopes from it of uniformity either in practice or in opinion. We are taught beside, by woful experience, that reason, even the most convincing, has no commanding influence over the greater part of men. Reason, it is true, aided by experience, supports morality; by convincing us, that we cannot be happy if we abandon duty for any other interest. But conviction seldom weighs much against imperious passion; to control which the vigorous and commanding principle of duty is requisite, directed by the shining light of intuition.

A proposition laid down above, appears a sort of mystery in the moral system, That though evidently all moral duties are contrived for promoting the general good, yet that a choice is not permitted among different goods, or between good and ill; but that we are strictly tied down to perform or forbear certain particular acts, without regard to consequences; or, in other words, that we must not do wrong, whatever good it may produce. The

final cauſe I am about to unfold, will clear this myſtery, and ſet the beauty of the moral ſyſtem in a conſpicuous light. I begin with obſerving, that as the general good of mankind, or even of the ſociety we live in, reſults from many and various circumſtances intricately combined; it is far above the capacity of man, to judge in every inſtance what particular action will tend the moſt to that end. The authoriſing, therefore, a man to trace out his duty, by weighing endleſs circumſtances, good and ill, would open a wide door to partiality and paſſion, and often lead him unwittingly to prefer the preponderating ill, under a falſe appearance of being the greater good. At that rate, the opinions of men about right and wrong, would be as various as their faces; which, as obſerved above, would totally unhinge ſociety. It is better ordered by Providence even for the general good, that, avoiding complex and obſcure objects, we are directed by the moral ſenſe to perform certain plain and ſimple acts, which admit no ambiguity.

In the next place, To permit ill in order to produce greater good, may ſuit a being of univerſal benevolence; but is repugnant to the nature of man, compoſed of ſelfiſh and benevolent principles. We have ſeen above, that the true moral balance depends on a ſubordination of ſelf-love to duty, and of diſcretionary benevolence to ſelf-love; and accordingly every man is ſenſible of in-

juſtice,

juſtice, when he is hurt in order to benefit another. Were it a rule in ſociety, That a greater good to any other would make it an act of juſtice to deprive me of my life, of my reputation, or of my property, I ſhould renounce the ſociety of men, and aſſociate with more harmleſs animals.

Thirdly, The true moral ſyſtem, that which is diſplayed above, is not only better ſuited to the nature of man and to his limited capacity, but contributes more to the general good, which I now proceed to demonſtrate. It would be loſing time to prove, that one entirely ſelfiſh is ill fitted for ſociety; and we have ſeen *, that univerſal benevolence, were it a duty, would contribute to the general good perhaps leſs than abſolute ſelfiſhneſs. Man is too limited in capacity and in power for univerſal benevolence. Even the greateſt monarch has not power to exerciſe his benevolence, but within a very narrow ſphere; and if ſo, how unfit would ſuch a duty be for private perſons, who have very little power? Serving only to diſtreſs them by inability of performance, they would endeavour to ſmother it altogether, and give full ſcope to ſelfiſhneſs. Man is much better qualified for doing good, by a conſtitution in which benevolence is duly blended with ſelf-love. Benevolence as a duty, takes place of ſelf-love; a regulation eſſential to ſociety: benevolence as a virtue, not a duty, gives place to ſelf-love; becauſe as every

 man

* Sect. 4.

man has more power, knowledge and opportunity, to promote his own good than that of others, a greater quantity of good is produced, than if benevolence were our only principle of action. This holds, even supposing no harm done to any person: much more would it hold, were we permitted to hurt some, in order to produce more good to others.

The foregoing final causes respect morality in general. We now proceed to particulars; and the first and most important is the law of restraint. Man is evidently framed for society: and as there can be no society among creatures who prey upon each other, it was necessary to provide against mutual injuries; which is effectually done by this law. Its necessity with respect to personal security is self-evident; and with respect to property, its necessity will appear from what follows. In the nature of every man there is a propensity to hoard or store up things useful to himself and family. But this natural propensity would be rendered ineffectual, were he not secured in the possession of what he thus stores up; for no man will toil to accumulate what he cannot securely possess. This security is afforded by the moral sense, which dictates, that the first occupant of goods provided by nature for the subsistence of man, ought to be protected in the possession, and that such goods ought to be inviolably his property. Thus, by the great law of restraint, men have a protection for

their

their goods, as well as for their perſons; and are no leſs ſecure in ſociety, than if they were ſeparated from each other by impregnable walls.

Several other duties are little leſs eſſential than that of reſtraint, to the exiſtence of ſociety. Mutual truſt and confidence, without which ſociety would be an uncomfortable ſtate, enter into the character of the human ſpecies; to which the duties of veracity and fidelity correſpond. The final cauſe of theſe correſponding duties is obvious: the latter would be of no uſe in ſociety without the former; and the former, without the latter, would be hurtful, by laying men open to fraud and deceit.

With reſpect to veracity in particular, man is ſo conſtituted, that he muſt be indebted to information for the knowledge of moſt things that benefit or hurt him; and if he could not depend upon information, ſociety would be very little beneficial. Further, it is wiſely ordered, that we ſhould be bound by the moral ſenſe to ſpeak truth, even where we perceive no harm in tranſgreſſing that duty; becauſe it is ſufficient that harm may enſue, though not foreſeen. At the ſame time, falſehood always does miſchief: it may happen not to injure us externally in our reputation, or in our goods; but it never fails to injure us internally: the ſweeteſt and moſt refined pleaſure of ſociety, is a candid intercourſe of ſentiments, of opinions, of

of defires, and wifhes; and it would be poifon-ous to indulge any falfehood in fuch intercourfe.

Becaufe man is the weakeft of all animals in a ftate of feparation, and the very ftrongeft in fociety by mutual aid and fupport; covenants and promifes, which greatly contribute to thefe, are made binding by the moral fenfe.

The final caufe of the law of propriety, which enforces the duty we owe to ourfelves, comes next in order. In difcourfing upon thofe laws of nature which concern fociety, there is no occafion to mention any felf-duty but what relates to fociety; of which kind are prudence, temperance, induftry, firmnefs of mind. And that fuch qualities fhould be made our duty, is wifely ordered in a double refpect; firft, as qualifying us to act a proper part in fociety; and next, as entitling us to good-will from others. It is the intereft, no doubt, of every man, to fuit his behaviour to the dignity of his nature, and to the ftation allotted him by Providence; for fuch rational conduct contributes to happinefs, by preferving health, procuring plenty, gaining the efteem of others, and, which of all is the greateft bleffing, by gaining a juftly-founded felf-efteem. But here intereft folely is not relied on: the powerful authority of duty is added, that in a matter of the utmoft importance to ourfelves, and of fome importance to the fociety we live in, our conduct may be regular and fteady. Thefe duties tend not only to render a man happy in himfelf; but alfo by

by procuring the good-will and esteem of others, to command their aid and assistance in time of need.

I proceed to the final causes of natural rewards and punishments. It is laid down above, that controversies about property and about other matters of interest, must be adjusted by the standard of right and wrong. But to bring rewards and punishments under the same standard, without regard to private conscience, would be a plan unworthy of our Maker. It is clear, that to reward one who is not conscious of merit, or to punish one who is not conscious of demerit, cannot answer any good end; and in particular, cannot tend either to improvement or to reformation of manners. How much more like the Deity is the plan of nature, which rewards no man who is not conscious that he merits reward, and punishes no man who is not conscious that he merits punishment! By that plan, and by that only, rewards and punishments accomplish every good end, a final cause most illustrious!

The rewards and punishments that attend the primary and secondary virtues, are finely contrived for supporting the distinction between them set forth above. Punishment must be confined to the transgression of primary virtues, it being the intention of nature that secondary virtues be entirely free. On the other hand, secondary virtues are more highly rewarded than primary: generosity, for

for example, makes a greater figure than justice; and magnanimity, heroifm, undaunted courage, a ftill greater figure. One would imagine at firft view, that the primary virtues, being more effential, fhould be entitled to the firft place in our efteem, and be more amply rewarded than the fecondary; and yet in elevating the latter above the former, peculiar wifdom and forefight are confpicuous. Punifhment is appropriated to enforce primary virtues; and if thefe virtues were alfo attended with the higheft rewards, fecondary virtues, degraded to a lower rank, would be deprived of that enthufiaftic admiration which is their chief fupport: felf-intereft would univerfally prevail over benevolence; and would banifh thofe numberlefs favours we receive from each other in fociety, which are beneficial in point of intereft, and ftill more fo by generating affection and friendfhip.

In our progrefs through final caufes, we come at laft to reparation, one of the principles deftined by Providence for redreffing wrongs committed, and for preventing reiteration. The final caufe of this principle, where the mifchief arifes from intention, is clear: for to protect individuals in fociety, it is not fufficient that the delinquent be punifhed; it is neceffary over and above, that the mifchief be repaired.

Secondly, Where the act is wrong or unjuft, though not underftood by the author to be fo, it is wifely ordered that reparation fhould follow; which

will

will thus appear. Confidering the fallibility of man, it would be too fevere never to give any allowance for error. On the other hand, to make it a law in our nature, never to take advantage of error, would be giving too much indulgence to indolence and remiffion of mind, tending to make us neglect the improvement of our rational faculties. Our nature is fo happily framed, as to avoid thefe extremes by diftinguifhing between gain and lofs. No man is confcious of wrong, when he takes advantage of an error committed by another to fave himfelf from lofs: if there muft be a lofs, common fenfe dictates, that it ought to reft upon the perfon who has erred, however innocently, rather than upon the perfon who has not erred. Thus, in a competition among creditors about the eftate of their bankrupt debtor, every one is at liberty to avail himfelf of an error committed by his competitor, in order to recover payment. But *in lucro captando*, the moral fenfe teacheth a different leffon; which is, that no man ought to lay hold of another's error to make gain by it. Thus, an heir finding a rough diamond in the repofitories of his anceftor, gives it away, miftaking it for a common pebble: the purchafer is in confcience and equity bound to reftore, or to pay a juft price.

Thirdly, The following confiderations refpecting the precaution that is neceffary in acting, unfold a final caufe, no lefs beautiful than that laft mentioned. Society could not fubfift in any tolerable

lerable manner, were full ſcope given to raſhneſs and negligence, and to every action that ſtrictly ſpeaking is not criminal; whence it is a maxim, founded no leſs upon utility than upon juſtice, That men in ſociety ought to be extremely circumſpect, as to every action that may poſſibly do harm. On the other hand, it is alſo a maxim, That as the proſperity and happineſs of man depend on action, activity ought to be encouraged, inſtead of being diſcouraged by dread of conſequences. Theſe maxims, ſeemingly in oppoſition, have natural limits that prevent their encroaching one upon the other. There is a certain degree of attention and circumſpection that men generally beſtow upon affairs, proportioned to their importance: if that degree were not ſufficient to defend againſt a claim of reparation, individuals would be too much cramped in action; which would be a great diſcouragement to activity: if a leſs degree were ſufficient, there would be too great ſcope for raſh or remiſs conduct; which would prove the bane of ſociety. Theſe limits, which evidently tend to the good of ſociety, are adjuſted by the moral ſenſe; which dictates, as laid down in the ſection of Reparation, that the man who acts with foreſight of the probability of miſchief, or acts raſhly and uncautiouſly without ſuch foreſight, ought to be liable for conſequences; but that the man who acts cautiouſly, without foreſeeing or ſuſpecting any

any mifchief, ought not to be liable for confe-quences.

In the fame fection it is laid down, that the moral fenfe requires from every man, not his own degree of vigilance and attention, which may be very fmall, but that which belongs to the common nature of the fpecies. The final caufe of that regulation will appear upon confidering, that were reparation to depend upon perfonal circumftances, there would be a neceffity of inquiring into the character of individuals, their education, their manner of living, and the extent of their underftanding; which would render judges arbitrary, and fuch law-fuits inextricable. But by affuming the common nature of the fpecies as a ftandard, by which every man in confcience judges of his own actions, law-fuits about reparation are rendered eafy and expeditious.

SECT. VIII.

Liberty and Neceffity confidered with refpect to Morality.

HAVING, in the foregoing fections, afcertained the reality of a moral fenfe, with its fentiments of approbation and difapprobation, praife and blame; the purpofe of the prefent fection is, to fhew, that thefe fentiments are confiftent with the

the laws that govern the actions of man as a rational being. In order to which, it is firſt neceſſary to explain theſe laws; for there has been much controverſy about them, eſpecially among divines of the Arminian and Calviniſt ſects.

Human actions, as laid down in the firſt ſection, are of three kinds: one, where we act by inſtinct, without any view to conſequences; one, where we act by will, in order to produce ſome effect; and one, where we act againſt will. With reſpect to the firſt, the agent acts blindly, without deliberation or choice; and the external act follows neceſſarily from the inſtinctive impulſe *. Voluntary actions done with a view to an end, are in a very different condition: into theſe, deſire and will, enter: deſire to accompliſh the end goes firſt; the will to act in order to accompliſh the end is next;

* A ſtonechatter makes its neſt on the ground or near it; and the young, as ſoon as they can ſhift for themſelves, leave the neſt inſtinctively. An egg of that bird was laid in a ſwallow's neſt, fixed to the roof of a church. The ſwallow fed all the young equally, without diſtinction. The young ſtonechatter left the neſt at the uſual time before it could fly; and falling to the ground, it was taken up dead. Here is inſtinct in purity, exerting itſelf blindly without regard to variation of circumſtances. The ſame is obſervable in our dunghil-fowl. They feed on worms, corn, and other ſeeds dropt on the ground. In order to diſcover their food, nature has provided them with an inſtinct to ſcrape with the foot; and the inſtinct is ſo regularly exerciſed, that they ſcrape even when they are ſet upon a heap of corn.

next; and the external act follows of course. Desire considered as what influences the will, is termed a *motive*. Thus, hearing that my friend is in the hands of robbers, I burn with desire to free him: desire influences my will to arm my servants, and to fly to his relief. Actions done against will come in afterward.

But what is it that raises desire? The answer is ready: it is the prospect of attaining some agreeable end, or of avoiding one that is disagreeable. And if it be inquired, What makes an object agreeable or disagreeable; the answer is equally ready, that our nature makes it so. Certain visible objects are agreeable, certain sounds, and certain smells: other objects of these senses are disagreeable. But there we must stop; for we are far from being so intimately acquainted with our own nature as to assign the causes. These hints are sufficient for my present purpose: if one be curious to know more, the theory of desire, and of agreeableness and disagreeableness, will be found in Elements of Criticism *.

With respect to instinctive actions, no person, I presume, thinks that there is any freedom: an infant applies to the nipple, and a bird builds a nest, no less necessarily than a stone falls to the ground. With respect to voluntary actions, done in order to produce some effect, the necessity is the same, though less apparent at first view.

* Chap. 2.

The external action is determined by the will: the will is determined by desire: and desire by what is agreeable or disagreeable. Here is a chain of causes and effects, not one link of which is arbitrary, or under command of the agent: he cannot will but according to his desire: he cannot desire but according to what is agreeable or disagreeable in the objects perceived: nor do these qualities depend on his inclination or fancy; he has no power to make a beautiful woman appear ugly, nor to make a rotten carcase smell sweetly.

Many good men apprehending danger to morality from holding our actions to be necessary, endeavour to break the chain of causes and effects above mentioned, maintaining, "That whatever "influence desire or motives may have, it is the "agent himself who is the cause of every action; "that desire may advise, but cannot command; "and therefore that a man is still free to act in "contradiction to desire, and to the strongest mo- "tives." That a being may exist, which in every case acts blindly and arbitrarily, without having any end in view, I can make a shift to conceive: but it is difficult for me even to imagine a thinking and rational being, that has affections and passions, that has a desirable end in view, that can easily accomplish this end; and yet, after all, can fly off, or remain at rest, without any cause, reason, or motive, to sway it. If such a whimsical being can possibly exist, I am certain that man is not

not the being. There is perhaps not a perſon above the condition of a changeling, but can ſay why he did ſo and ſo, what moved him, what he intended. Nor is a ſingle fact ſtated to make us believe, that ever a man acted againſt his own deſire, who was not compelled by external force. On the contrary, conſtant and univerſal experience proves, that human actions are governed by certain inflexible laws; and that a man cannot exert his ſelf-motive power, but in purſuance of ſome deſire or motive.

Had a motive always the ſame influence, actions proceeding from it would appear no leſs neceſſary than the actions of matter. The various degrees of influence that motives have on different men at the ſame time, and on the ſame man at different times, occaſion a doubt by ſuggeſting a notion of chance. Some motives however have ſuch influence, as to leave no doubt: a timid female has a phyſical power to throw herſelf into the mouth of a lion, roaring for food; but ſhe is withheld by terror no leſs effectually than by cords: if ſhe ſhould ruſh upon the lion, would not every one conclude that ſhe was frantic? A man, though in a deep ſleep, retains a phyſical power to act, but he cannot exert it. A man, though deſperately in love, retains a phyſical power to refuſe the hand of his miſtreſs; but he cannot exert that power in contradiction to his own ardent deſire, more than if he were faſt aſleep. Now if a

ſtrong motive have a neceſſary influence, there is no reaſon for doubting, but that a weak motive muſt alſo have its influence, the ſame in kind, though not in degree. Some actions indeed are ſtrangely irregular: but let the wildeſt action be ſcrutinized, there will always be diſcovered ſome motive or deſire, which, however whimſical or capricious, was what influenced the perſon to act. Of two contending motives, is it not natural to expect that the ſtronger will prevail, however little its exceſs may be? If there be any doubt, it muſt ariſe from a ſuppoſition that a weak motive can be reſiſted arbitrarily. Where then are we to fix the boundary between a weak and a ſtrong motive? If a weak motive can be reſiſted, why not one a little ſtronger, and why not the ſtrongeſt? In Elements of Criticiſm * the reader will find many examples of contrary motives weighing againſt each other. Let him ponder theſe with the ſtricteſt attention: his concluſion will be, that between two motives, however nearly balanced, a man has not an arbitrary choice, but muſt yield to the ſtronger. The mind indeed fluctuates for ſome time, and feels itſelf in a meaſure looſe: at laſt, however, it is determined by the more powerful motive, as a balance is by the greater weight after many vibrations.

Such then are the laws that govern our voluntary actions. A man is abſolutely free to act according

* Chap. 2. Part 4.

cording to his own will; greater freedom than which is not conceivable. At the fame time, as man is made accountable for his conduct, to his Maker, to his fellow-creatures, and to himfelf, he is not left to act arbitrarily; for at that rate he would be altogether unaccountable: his will is regulated by defire; and defire by what pleafes or difpleafes him. Where we are fubjected to the will of another, would it be our wifh, that his will fhould be under no regulation? And where we are guided by our own will, would it be reafonable to wifh, that it fhould be under no regulation, but be exerted without reafon, without any motive, and contrary to common fenfe? Thus, with regard to human conduct, there is a chain of laws eftablifhed by nature, no one link of which is left arbitrary. By that wife fyftem, man is made accountable: by it, he is made a fit fubject for divine and human government: by it, perfons of fagacity forefee the conduct of others: and by it, the prefence of the Deity with refpect to human actions, is clearly eftablifhed.

The abfurd figure that a man would make acting in contradiction to motives, fhould be fufficient to open our eyes without an argument. What a defpicable figure does a perfon make, upon whom the fame motive has great influence at one time, and very little at another? He is a bad member of fociety, and cannot be relied on as a friend or as an affociate. But how highly rational is this

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ſuppoſed perſon, compared with one who can act in contradiction to every motive? The former may be termed whimſical or capricious: the latter is worſe; he is abſolutely unaccountable, and cannot be the ſubject of government, more than a lump of matter unconſcious of its own motion.

Let the faculty of acting be compared with that of reaſoning: the compariſon will reconcile every unbiaſſed mind to the neceſſary influence of motives. A man is tied by his nature to form concluſions upon what appears to him true at the time. This indeed does not always ſecure him againſt error; but would he be more ſecure by a power to form concluſions contrary to what appears true? Such a power would make him a moſt abſurd reaſoner. Would he be leſs abſurd in acting, if he had a power to act againſt motives, and contrary to what he thinks right or eligible? To act in that manner, is inconſiſtent with any notion we can form of a ſenſible being. Nor do we ſuppoſe that man is ſuch a being; in accounting for any action, however whimſical, we always aſcribe it to ſome motive; never once dreaming that there was no motive.

And after all, where would be the advantage of ſuch an arbitrary power? Can a rational man wiſh ſeriouſly to have ſuch a power? or can he ſeriouſly think, that God would make man ſo whimſical a being? To endue man with a degree of ſelf-command ſufficient to reſiſt every vitious motive, without

without any power to resist those that are virtuous, would indeed be a valuable gift; too valuable indeed for man, because it would exalt him to be an angel. But such self-command as to resist both equally, which is the present supposition, would be a great curse, as it would unqualify us for being governed either by God or by man. Better far to be led as rational creatures by the prospect of good, however erroneous our judgment may sometimes be.

While all other animals are subjected to divine government and unerringly fulfil their destination, and considering that man is the only terrestrial being who is formed to know his Maker and to worship him; will it not found harsh that he alone should be withdrawn from divine government? The power of resisting the strongest motives, whether of religion or of morality, would render him independent of the Deity.

This reasoning is too diffuse: if it can be comprehended in a single view, it will make the deeper impression. There may be conceived different systems for governing man as a thinking and rational being. One is, That virtuous motives should always prevail over every other motive. This, in appearance, would be the most perfect government: but man is not so constituted; and there is reason to doubt, whether such perfection would in his present state correspond to the other branches of his nature *. Another system is, that virtuous

* See book 2. sketch 1. at the end.

motives ſometimes prevail, ſometimes vitious; and that we are always determined by the prevailing motive. This is the true ſyſtem of nature; and hence great variety of character and of conduct among men. A third ſyſtem is, That motives have influence; but that one can act in contradiction to every motive. This is the ſyſtem I have been combating. Obſerve only what it reſolves into. How is an action to be accounted for that is done in contradiction to every motive? It wanders from the region of common ſenſe into that of mere chance. If ſuch were the nature of man, no one could rely on another: a promiſe or an oath would be a rope of ſand: the utmoſt cordiality between two friends would be no ſecurity to either againſt the other: the firſt weapon that comes in the way might be lethal. Would any man wiſh to have been formed according to ſuch a model? He would probably wiſh to have been formed according to the model firſt mentioned: but that is denied him, virtuous motives ſometimes prevailing, ſometimes vitious; and from the wiſdom of Providence we have reaſon to believe, that this law is of all the beſt fitted for man in his preſent ſtate.

To conclude this branch of the ſubject: In none of the works of Providence, as far as we can penetrate, is there diſplayed a deeper reach of art and wiſdom, than in the laws of action peculiar to man as a thinking and rational being. Were he

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let loofe to act in contradiction to motives, there would be no place for prudence, forefight, nor for adjufting means to an end: It could not be forefeen by others what a man would do the next hour; nay it could not be forefeen even by himfelf. Man would not be capable of rewards and punifhments: he would not be fitted, either for divine or for human government: he would be a creature that has no refemblance to the human race. But man is not left loofe; for though he is at liberty to act according to his own will, yet his will is regulated by defire, and defire by what pleafes and difpleafes. This connection preferves uniformity of conduct, and confines human actions within the great chain of caufes and effects. By this admirable fyftem, liberty and neceffity, feemingly incompatible, are made perfectly concordant, fitting us for fociety, and for government both human and divine.

Having explained the laws that govern human actions; we proceed to what is chiefly intended in the prefent fection, which is, to examine how far the moral fentiments handled in the foregoing fections are confiftent with thefe laws. Let it be kept in view, that the perception of a right and a wrong in actions, is founded entirely upon the moral fenfe. And that upon the fame fenfe are founded the fentiments of approbation and praife when a man does right, and of difapprobation and blame when he does wrong. Were we deftitute of the moral fenfe, right and wrong, praife and blame,

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would be as little underſtood as colours are by one born blind *.

The formidable argument urged to prove that our moral ſentiments are inconſiſtent with the ſuppoſed neceſſary influence of motives, is what follows. "If motives have a neceſſary influence on "our actions, there can be no good reaſon to "praiſe a man for doing right, nor to blame him "for doing wrong. What foundation can there "be either for praiſe or blame, when it was not "in a man's power to have acted otherwiſe. A "man commits murder, inſtigated by a ſudden fit "of revenge: why ſhould he be puniſhed, if he "acted neceſſarily, and could not reſiſt the vio- "lence of the paſſion?" Here it is ſuppoſed, that a power of reſiſtance is eſſential to praiſe and blame. But upon examination it will be found, that this ſuppoſition has not any ſupport in the moral

* In an intricate ſubject like the preſent, great care ſhould be taken to avoid ambiguities. The term *praiſe* has two different ſignifications: in one ſenſe it is oppoſed to *blame*; in another, to *diſpraiſe*. In the former ſenſe, it expreſſes a moral ſentiment: in the latter, it expreſſes only the approving any object that pleaſes me. I praiſe one man for his candour, and blame another for being a double-dealer. Theſe, both of them, imply will and intention. I praiſe a man for being acute; but for being dull, I only diſpraiſe him. I praiſe a woman for beauty; but blame not any for uglineſs, I only diſpraiſe them. None of theſe particulars imply will or intention.

moral ſenſe, nor in reaſon, nor in the common ſenſe of mankind.

With reſpect to the firſt, the moral ſenſe, as we have ſeen above, places innocence and guilt, and conſequently praiſe and blame, entirely upon will and intention. The connection between the motive and the action, ſo far from diminiſhing, enhances the praiſe or blame. The greater influence a virtuous motive has, the greater is the virtue of the actor, and the more warm our praiſe. On the other hand, the greater influence a vitious motive has, the greater is the vice of the actor, and the more violently do we blame him. As this is the cardinal point, I wiſh to have it conſidered in a general view. It is eſſential both to human and divine government, that the influence of motives ſhould be neceſſary. It is equally eſſential, that that neceſſary influence ſhould not have the effect to leſſen guilt in the eſtimation of men. To fulfil both ends, guilt is placed by the moral ſenſe entirely upon will and intention: a man accordingly blames himſelf for doing miſchief willingly and intentionally, without once conſidering whether he acted neceſſarily or not. And his ſentiments are adopted by all the world: they pronounce the ſame ſentence of condemnation that he himſelf does. A man put to the torture, yields to the pain, and with bitter reluctance reveals the ſecrets of his party: another does the ſame, yielding to a tempting bribe. The latter only is blamed as guilty

guilty of a crime; and yet the bribe perhaps operated as ſtrongly on the latter, as torture did on the former. But the one was compelled reluctantly to reveal the ſecrets of his party; and therefore is innocent: the other acted willingly, in order to procure a great ſum of money; and therefore is guilty.

With reſpect to reaſon, I obſerve, that the moral ſenſe is the only judge in this controverſy, not the faculty of reaſon. I ſhould, however, not be afraid of a ſentence againſt me, were reaſon to be the judge. For would not reaſon dictate, that the leſs a man wavers about his duty, or, in other words, the leſs influence vitious motives have, the more praiſe-worthy he is; and the more blameable, the leſs influence virtuous motives have?

Nor are we led by common ſenſe to differ from reaſon or from the moral ſenſe. A man commits murder, overcome by a ſudden fit of revenge which he could not reſiſt: do we not reflect, even at firſt view, that the man did not deſire to reſiſt; and that he would have committed the murder, though he had not been under any neceſſity? a perſon of plain underſtanding will ſay, What ſignifies it whether the criminal could reſiſt it or no, when he committed the murder wittingly and willingly? A man gives poiſon privately out of revenge. Does any one doubt of his guilt, when he never once repented; though after adminiſtering the poiſon it no longer was in his power to draw back? A

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man may be guilty and blame-worthy, even where there is external compulſion that he cannot reſiſt. With ſword in hand I run to attack an enemy: my foot ſlipping, I fall headlong upon him, and by that accident the ſword is puſhed into his body. The external act was not the effect of Will, but of accident: but my intention was to commit murder, and I am guilty. All men acknowledge, that the Deity is neceſſarily good. Does that circumſtance detract from his praiſe in common apprehenſion? On the contrary, he merits from us the higheſt praiſe on that very account.

It is commonly ſaid, that there can be no virtue where there is no ſtruggle. Virtue, it is true, is beſt known from a ſtruggle: a man who has never met with a temptation, can be little confident of his virtue. But the obſervation taken in a ſtrict ſenſe, is undoubtedly erroneous. A man, tempted to betray his truſt, wavers; but, after much doubting, refuſes at laſt the bribe. Another heſitates not a moment, but rejects the bribe with diſdain: duty is obſtinate, and will not ſuffer him even to deliberate. Is there no virtue in the latter? Undoubtedly more than in the former.

Upon the whole, it appears that praiſe and blame reſt ultimately upon the diſpoſition or frame of mind *. Nor is it obvious, that a power to act againſt

* Malice and reſentment, though commonly joined together, have no reſemblance but in producing miſchief. Malice is

againſt motives, could vary in any degree theſe moral ſentiments. When a man commits a crime, let it be ſuppoſed that he could have reſiſted the prevailing motive. Why then did he not reſiſt, inſtead of bringing upon himſelf ſhame and miſery? The anſwer muſt be, for no other can be given, that his diſpoſition is vicious, and that he is a deteſtable creature. Further, it is not a little difficult to conceive, how a man can reſiſt a prevailing motive, without having any thing in his mind that ſhould engage him to reſiſt it. But letting that paſs, I make the following ſuppoſition. A man is tempted by avarice to accept a bribe: if he reſiſt upon the principle of duty, he is led by the prevailing motive: if he reſiſt without having any reaſon or motive for reſiſting, I cannot diſcover any merit in ſuch reſiſtance: it ſeems to reſolve into a matter of chance or accident, whether he reſiſt or do not reſiſt. Where can the merit lie of reſiſting a vicious motive, when reſiſtance happens by mere chance? and where the demerit of reſiſting a virtuous motive, when it is owing to the ſame chance? If a man, actuated by no principle, good or bad, and having no end or purpoſe in view, ſhould kill his neighbour, I ſee not that he

is a propenſity of nature that operates deliberately without paſſion: reſentment is a paſſion to which even good-natured people are ſubject. A malicious character is eſteemed much more vitious than one that is iraſcible. Does not this ſhew that virtue and vice conſiſt more in diſpoſition than in action?

he would be more accountable, than if he had acted in his ſleep, or were mad.

Human puniſhments are perfectly conſiſtent with the neceſſary influence of motives, without ſuppoſing a power to withſtand them. If it be urged, That a man ought not to be puniſhed for committing a crime when he could not reſiſt: the anſwer is, That as he committed the crime intentionally and with his eyes open, he is guilty in his own opinion, and in the opinion of all men. Here is a juſt foundation for puniſhment. And its utility is great; being intended to deter people from committing crimes. The dread of puniſhment is a weight in the ſcale on the ſide of virtue, to counterbalance vitious motives.

The final cauſe of this branch of our nature is admirable. If the neceſſary influence of motives had the effect either to leſſen the merit of a virtuous action, or the demerit of a crime, morality would be totally unhinged. The moſt virtuous action would of all be the leaſt worthy of praiſe; and the moſt vitious be of all the leaſt worthy of blame. Nor would the evil ſtop there: inſtead of curbing inordinate paſſions, we ſhould be encouraged to indulge them, as an excellent excuſe for doing wrong. Thus, the moral ſentiments of approbation and diſapprobation, of praiſe and blame, are found perfectly conſiſtent with the laws above mentioned that govern human actions, with-

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out neceffity of recurring to an imaginay power of acting againft motives.

The only plaufible objection I have met with againft the foregoing theory, is the remorfe a man feels for a crime he fuddenly commits, and as fuddenly repents of. During a fit of bitter remorfe for having flain my favourite fervant in a violent paffion, without juft provocation, I accufe myfelf for having given way to paffion; and acknowledge that I could and ought to have reftrained it. Here we find remorfe founded on a fyftem directly oppofite to that above laid down; a fyftem that acknowledges no neceffary connection between an action and its motive; but, on the contrary, fuppofes that it is in a man's power to refift his paffion, and that he ought to refift it. What fhall be faid upon this point? Can a man be a neceffary agent, when he is confcious of the contrary, and is fenfible that he can act in contradiction to motives? This objection is ftrong in appearance; and would be invincible, were we not happily relieved of it by a doctrine laid down in Elements of Criticifm * concerning the irregular influence of paffion on our opinions and fentiments. Upon examination, it will be found, that the prefent cafe may be added to the many examples there given of that irregular influence. In a peevifh fit, I take exception at fome flight word or gefture of my friend, which I interpret as if he doubted of my veracity,

* Chap. 2. Part 5.

veracity. I am inftantly in a flame: in vain he protefts that he had no meaning, for impatience will not fuffer me to liften. I bid him draw, which he does with reluctance; and before he is well prepared, I give him a mortal wound. Bitter remorfe and anguifh fucceed inftantly to rage. "What have "I done? I have murdered my innocent, my beft "friend; and yet I was not mad—with that hand "I did the horrid deed; why did not I rather "turn it againft my own heart?" Here every impreffion of neceffity vanifhes: my mind informs me that I was abfolutely free, and that I ought to have fmothered my paffion. I put an oppofite cafe. A brutal fellow treats me with great indignity, and proceeds even to a blow. My paffion rifes beyond the poffibility of reftraint: I can fcarce forbear fo long as to bid him draw; and that moment I ftab him to the heart. I am forry for having been engaged with a ruffian; but have no contrition nor remorfe. In this cafe, I never once dream that I could have refifted the impulfe of paffion: on the contrary, my thoughts and words are, "That flefh and blood could not "bear the affront; and that I muft have been "branded for a coward, had I not done what I "did." In reality, both actions were equally neceffary. Whence then opinions and fentiments fo oppofite to each other? The irregular influence of paffion on our opinions and fentiments, will folve the queftion. All violent paffions are prone to their own gratification. A man who has done

an action that he repents of and that affects him with anguish, abhors himself, and is odious in his own eyes: he wishes to find himself guilty; and the thought that his guilt is beyond the possibility of excuse, gratifies the passion. In the first case, accordingly, remorse forces upon me a conviction that I might have restrained my passion, and ought to have restrained it. I will not give way to any excuse; because in a severe fit of remorse, it gives me pain to be excused. In the other case, as there is no remorse, things appear in their true light without disguise. To illustrate this reasoning, I observe, that passion warps my judgment of the actions of others, as well as of my own. Many examples are given in the chapter above quoted: join to these the following. My servant aiming at a partridge, happens to shoot a favourite spaniel crossing the way unseen. Inflamed with anger, I storm at his rashness, pronounce him guilty, and will listen to no excuse. When passion subsides, I become sensible that the action was merely accidental, and that the man is absolutely innocent. The nurse overlays my only child, the long-expected heir to a great estate. With difficulty I refrain from putting her to death: "The wretch "has murdered my infant: she ought to be torn "to pieces." When I turn calm, the matter appears to me in a very different light. The poor woman is inconsolable, and can scarce believe that she is innocent: she bitterly reproaches herself

for

for want of care and concern. But, upon cool reflection, both ſhe and I become ſenſible, that no perſon in ſound ſleep has any ſelf-command, and that we cannot be anſwerable for any action of which we are not conſcious. Thus, upon the whole, we diſcover, that any impreſſion we occaſionally have of being able to act in contradiction to motives, is the reſult of paſſion, not of ſound judgment.

The reader will obſerve, that this ſection is copied from Eſſays on Morality and Natural Religion. The ground-work is the ſame: the alterations are only in the ſuperſtructure; and the ſubject is abridged, in order to adapt it to its preſent place. The preceding parts of the Sketch were publiſhed in the ſecond edition of the Principles of Equity. But as law-books have little currency, the publiſhing the whole in one eſſay, will not, I hope, be thought improper.

APPENDIX.

Upon Chance and Contingency.

I Hold it to be an intuitive propoſition, That the Deity is the primary cauſe of all things, that with conſummate wiſdom he formed the

great plan of government, which he carries on by laws ſuited to the different natures of animate and inanimate beings; and that theſe laws, produce a regular chain of cauſes and effects in the moral as well as the material world, admitting no events but what are comprehended in the original plan *. Hence it clearly follows, that chance is excluded out of this world, that nothing can happen by accident, and that no event is arbitrary or contingent. This is the doctrine of the eſſay quoted; and, in my apprehenſion, well founded. But I cannot ſubſcribe to what follows, "That we have an impreſſion of chance and contingency, which conſequently muſt be deluſive." I would not willingly admit any deluſion in the nature of man, unleſs it were made evident beyond contradiction; and I now ſee clearly, that the impreſſion we have of chance and contingency, is not deluſive, but perfectly conſiſtent with the eſtabliſhed plan.

The explanation of chance and contingency in the ſaid eſſay, ſhall be given in the author's own words, as a proper text to reaſon upon. "In our "ordinary train of thinking, it is certain that all "events appear not to us as neceſſary. A multi- "tude of events ſeem to be under our power to "cauſe or to prevent; and we readily make a di- "ſtinction betwixt events that are *neceſſary*, *i. e.* "that muſt be; and events that are *contingent*, *i. e.* that

* See Eſſays on Morality and Natural Religion, Part i. Eſſay 3.

" that may be, or may not be. This diſtinction
" is void of truth: for all things that fall out ei-
" ther in the material or moral world, are, as we
" have ſeen, alike neceſſary, and alike the reſult
" of fixed laws. Yet, whatever conviction a phi-
" loſopher may have of this, the diſtinction be-
" twixt things neceſſary and things contingent,
" poſſeſſes his ordinary train of thought, as much
" as it poſſeſſes the moſt illiterate. We act uni-
" verſally upon that diſtinction: nay it is in truth
" the cauſe of all the labour, care, and induſtry
" of mankind. I illuſtrate this doctrine by an
" example. Conſtant experience hath taught us,
" that death is a neceſſary event. The human
" frame is not made to laſt for ever in its preſent
" condition; and no man thinks of more than a
" temporary exiſtence upon this globe. But the
" particular time of our death appears a contin-
" gent event. However certain it be, that the
" time and manner of the death of each individual
" is determinined by a train of preceding cauſes;
" and is no leſs fixed than the hour of the ſun's
" riſing or ſetting; yet no perſon is affected by
" this doctrine. In the care of prolonging life,
" we are directed by the ſuppoſed contingency of
" the time of death, which, to a certain term of
" years, we conſider as depending in a great mea-
" ſure on ourſelves, by caution againſt accidents,
" due uſe of food, exerciſe, &c. Theſe means are
" proſecuted with the ſame diligence as if there

"were in fact no necessary train of causes to fix
"the period of life. In short, whoever attends to
"his own practical ideas, whoever reflects upon
"the meaning of the following words, which oc-
"cur in all languages, of things *possible, contingent,*
"*that are in our power to cause or prevent;* who-
"ever, I say, reflects upon these words, will clear-
"ly see, that they suggest certain perceptions or
"notions repugnant to the doctrine above esta-
"blished of universal necessity."

In order to show that there is no repugnance, I begin with defining *chance* and *contingency.* The former is applied to events that have happened; the latter to future events. When we say a thing has happened by *chance,* we surely do not mean that *chance* was the cause; for no person ever imagined that *chance* is a thing that can act, and by acting produce events: we only mean, that we are ignorant of the cause, and that, for ought we see, it might have happened or not happened, or have happened differently. Aiming at a bird, I shoot *by chance* a favourite spaniel: the meaning is not, that chance killed the dog, but that as to me the dog's death was accidental. With respect to contingency, future events that are variable and the cause unknown, are said to be contingent; changes of the weather, for example, whether it will be frost or thaw to-morrow, whether fair or foul. In a word, chance and contingency applied to events, mean not that such events happen with-

out any caufe, but only that we are ignorant of the caufe.

It appears to me, that there is no fuch thing in human nature, as a fenfe that any thing happens without a caufe: fuch a fenfe would be grofsly delufive. It is indeed true, that our fenfe of a caufe is not always equally diftinct: with refpect to an event that happens regularly, fuch as fummer, winter, rifing or fetting of the fun, we have a diftinct fenfe of a caufe: our fenfe is lefs diftinct with refpect to events lefs regular, fuch as alterations of the weather; and extremely indiftinct with refpect to events that feldom happen, and that happen without any known caufe. But with refpect to no event whatever does our fenfe of a caufe vanifh altogether, and give place to a fenfe of things happening without a caufe.

Chance and contingency thus explained, fuggeft not any perception or notion repugnant to the doctrine of univerfal neceffity; for my ignorance of a caufe, does not, even in my own apprehenfion, exclude a caufe. Defcending to particulars, I take the example mentioned in the text, namely, the uncertainty of the time of my death. Knowing that my life depends in fome meafure on myfelf, I ufe all means to preferve it, by proper food, exercife, and care to prevent accidents. Nor is there any delufion here. I am moved to ufe thefe means by the defire I have to live: thefe means accordingly prove effectual to carry on my prefent

exiſtence to the appointed period; and in that view are ſo many links in the great chain of cauſes and effects. A burning coal falling from the grate upon the floor, wakes me from a ſound ſleep. I ſtart up to extinguiſh the fire. The motive is irreſiſtible: nor have I reaſon to reſiſt, were it in my power; for I conſider the extinction of the fire by my hand, to be one of the means choſen by Providence for prolonging my life to its deſtined period.

Were there a chain of cauſes and effects eſtabliſhed entirely independent on me, and were my life in no meaſure under my own power, it would indeed be fruitleſs for me to act; and the abſurdity of knowingly acting in vain, would be a prevailing motive for remaining at reſt. Upon that ſuppoſition, the *ignava ratio* of Chryſippus might take place; *cui ſi pareamus, nihil omnino agamus in vita* *. But I act neceſſarily when influenced by motives; and I have no reaſon to forbear, conſidering that my actions, by producing their intended effects, contribute to carry on the great chain.

PART

* "The indolent principle; which if we were to follow, "we ſhould do nothing in life."

PART II.

PROGRESS OF MORALITY.

HAVING unfolded the principles of morality, the next ſtep is to trace out its gradual progreſs, from its infancy among ſavages to its maturity among poliſhed nations. The hiſtory of opinions concerning the foundation of morality, falls not within my plan; and I am glad to be relieved from an article that is executed in perfection by more able hands *.

An animal is brought forth with every one of its external members: and completes its growth, not by production of any new member, but by addition of matter to thoſe originally formed. The ſame holds with reſpect to internal members; the ſenſes, for example, inſtincts, powers and faculties, principles and propenſities: theſe are coeval with the individual, and are gradually unfolded, ſome early, ſome late. The external ſenſes, being neceſſary for ſelf-preſervation, ſoon arrive at maturity. Some internal ſenſes, of order for example, of propriety, of dignity, of grace, being of no uſe during infancy, are not only ſlow in their progreſs toward maturity, but require much culture. Among ſavages they are ſcarce perceptible.

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* Dr Cudworth and Dr Smith.

The moral ſenſe, in its progreſs, differs from thoſe laſt mentioned; being frequently diſcovered, even in childhood. It is however ſlow of growth, and ſeldom arrives at perfection without culture and experience.

The moral ſenſe not only ripens gradually with the other internal ſenſes mentioned, but from them acquires force and additional authority: a ſavage makes no difficulty to kill an enemy in cold blood: bloody ſcenes are familiar to him, and his moral ſenſe is not ſufficiently vigorous to give him compunction. The action appears in a different light to a perſon of delicate feelings; and accordingly, the moral ſenſe has much more authority over thoſe who have received a refined education, than over ſavages.

It is pleaſant to trace the progreſs of morality in members of a poliſhed nation. Objects of external ſenſe make the firſt impreſſions; and from them are derived a ſtock of ſimple ideas. Affection, accompanying ideas, is firſt directed to particular objects, ſuch as my father, my brother, my companion. The mind, opening by degrees, takes in complex objects, ſuch as my country, my religion, the government under which I live; and theſe alſo become objects of affection. Our connections multiply; and the moral ſenſe, acquiring ſtrength as the mind opens, regulates our duty to every connected object. Objects of hatred multiply as well as objects of affection, and give full

ſcope

ſcope to diſſocial paſſions, the moſt formidable antagoniſts that morality has to encounter. But nature hath provided a remedy: the perſon who indulges malice or revenge, is commonly the greateſt ſufferer by the indulgence: men become wiſe by experience, and have more peace and ſatisfaction in foſtering kindly affection: ſtormy paſſions are ſubdued, or brought under rigid diſcipline; and benevolence triumphs over ſelfiſhneſs. We refine upon the pleaſures of ſociety: we learn to ſubmit our opinions: we affect to give preference to others; and readily fall in with whatever ſweetens ſocial intercourſe: we carefully avoid cauſes of diſcord; and overlooking trivial offences, we are ſatisfied with moderate reparation, even for groſs injuries.

A nation from its original ſavage ſtate, grows to maturity like the individuals above deſcribed, and the progreſs of morality is the ſame in both. The ſavage ſtate is the infancy of a nation, during which the moral ſenſe is feeble, yielding to cuſtom, to imitation, to paſſion. But a nation, like a member of a poliſhed ſociety, ripens gradually, and acquires a taſte in the fine arts, with acuteneſs of ſenſe in matters of right and wrong. Hatred and revenge, the great obſtacles to moral duty, raged without controul, while the privilege of avenging wrongs was permitted to individuals *. But hatred and revenge yielded gradually to the pleaſures

* See Hiſtorical Law Tracts, tract 1.

pleafures of fociety, and to the growing authority of the moral fenfe; and benevolent affections prevailed over diffocial paffions. In that comfortable period, we hear no more of cruelty as a national character: on the contrary, the averfion we have to an enemy, is even in war exercifed with moderation. Nor do the ftormy paffions ever again revive; for after a nation begins to decline from its meridian height, the paffions that prevail are not of the violent kind, but felfifh, timorous, and deceitful.

Morality however has not to this day arrived to fuch maturity, as to operate between nations with equal fteadinefs and vigour, as between individuals. Ought this to be regretted as an imperfection in our nature? I think not: had we the fame compunction of heart for injuring a nation as for injuring an individual, and were injuftice equally blameable as to both; war would ceafe, and a golden age enfue, than which a greater misfortune could not befal the human race*.

In the progrefs from maturity to a declining ftate, a nation differs widely from an individual: Old age puts an end to the latter: there are many caufes that weaken the former; but old age is none of them, if it be not in a metaphorical fenfe. Riches, felfifhnefs, and luxury, are the difeafes that weaken profperous nations: thefe difeafes, following each other in a train, corrupt the heart, dethrone

* Book 2. fketch 1.

dethrone the moral ſenſe, and make an anarchy in the ſoul: men ſtick at no expence to purchaſe pleaſure; and they ſtick at no vice to ſupply that expence.

Such are the outlines of morality in its progreſs from birth to burial; and theſe outlines I purpoſe to fill up with an induction of particulars. Looking back to the commencement of civil ſociety, when no wants were known but thoſe of nature, and when ſuch wants were amply provided for; we find individuals of the ſame tribe living innocently and cordially together: they had no irregular appetites, nor any ground for ſtrife. In that ſtate, moral principles joined their influence with that of national affection, to ſecure individuals from harm. Savages accordingly, who have plenty of food and are ſimple in habitation and clothing, ſeldom tranſgreſs the rules of morality within their own tribe. Diodorus Siculus, who compoſed his hiſtory recently after Cæſar's expedition into Britain, ſays, that the inhabitants dwelt in mean cottages covered with reeds or ſticks; that they were of much ſincerity and integrity, contented with plain and homely fare; and were ſtrangers to the exceſs and luxury of rich men. In Friezeland, in Holland, and in other maritime provinces of the Netherlands, locks and keys were unknown, till the inhabitants became rich by commerce: they contented themſelves with bare neceſſaries, which every one had in plenty. The Laplanders have

have no notion of theft. When they make an excursion into Norway, which is performed in the summer months, they leave their huts open, without fear that any thing will be purloined. Formerly they were entirely upright in their only commerce, that of bartering the skins of wild beasts for tobacco, brandy, and coarse cloth. But being often cheated by strangers, they begin to be more cunning. Theft was unknown among the Caribbees till Europeans came among them. When they lost any thing, they said innocently, "The "Christians have been here." Crantz, describing the inhabitants of Iceland before they were corrupted by commerce with strangers, says, that they lived under the same roof with their cattle; that every thing was common among them except their wives and children; and that they were simple in their manners, having no appetite but for what nature requires. In the reign of Edwin King of Northumberland, a child, as historians report, might have travelled with a purse of gold, without hazard of robbery: in our days of luxury, want is so intolerable, that even fear of death is not sufficient to deter us. All travellers agree, that the native Canadians are perfectly disinterested, abhorring deceit and lying. The Californians are fond of iron and sharp instruments; and yet are so strictly honest, that carpenter-tools left open during night, were safe. The savages of North America had no locks for their goods: they probably

bably have learned from Europeans to be more circumſpect. Procopius bears teſtimony *, that the Sclavi, like the Huns, were innocent people, free of malice. Plan Carpin, the Pope's ambaſſador to the Cham of Tartary, *anno* 1246, ſays, that the Tartars are not addicted to thieving; and that they leave their goods open without a lock. Nicholas Damaſcenus reports the ſame of the Celtæ. The original inhabitants of the iſland Borneo, expelled by the Mahometans from the ſea-coaſt to the centre of the country, are honeſt, induſtrious, and kindly to each other: they have ſome notion of property, but not ſuch as to render them covetous. Pagans in Siberia are numerous; and, though groſsly ignorant, eſpecially in matters of religion, they are a good moral people. It is rare to hear among them of perjury, thieving, fraud, or drunkenneſs; if we except thoſe who live among the Ruſſian Chriſtians, with whoſe vices they are tainted. Strahlenberg † bears teſtimony to their honeſty. Having employed a number of them in a long navigation, he ſlept in the ſame boat with men whoſe names he knew not, whoſe language he underſtood not, and yet loſt not a particle of his baggage. Being obliged to remain a fortnight among the Oſtiacs, upon the river Oby, his baggage lay open in a hut inhabited by a large family, and yet nothing was purloined. The following

* Hiſtoria Gothica, lib. 3.

† Deſcription of Ruſſia, Siberia, &c.

lowing incident, which he alſo mentions, is remarkable. A Ruſſian of Toboliki, in the courſe of a long journey, lodged one night in an Oſtiac's hut, and the next day on the road miſſed his purſe with a hundred rubles. His landlord's ſon, hunting at ſome diſtance from the hut, found the purſe, but left it there. By his father's order, he covered it with branches, to ſecure it in caſe an owner ſhould be found. After three months, the Ruſſian returning, lodged with the ſame Oſtiac; and mentioning occaſionally the loſs of his purſe, the Oſtiac, who at firſt did not recollect his face, cried out with joy, "Art thou the man who loſt that purſe? "my ſon ſhall go and ſhow thee where it lies, "that thou mayeſt take it up with thine own "hand." The Hottentots * have not the leaſt notion of theft: though immoderately fond of tobacco and brandy, they are employed by the Dutch for tending warehouſes full of theſe commodities. Here is an inſtance of probity above temptation, even among ſavages in the firſt ſtage of ſocial life. Some individuals are more liberally endued than others with virtuous principles: may it not be thought, that in that reſpect nature has been more kind to the Hottentots than to many other tribes? Spaniards, ſettled on the ſea-coaſt of Chili, carry on a commerce with neighbouring ſavages, for bridles, ſpurs, knives, and other manufactures of iron; and in return receive oxen, horſes,

* Kolben.

horses, and even children for slaves. A Spaniard carries his goods there; and after obtaining liberty to dispose of them, he moves about, and delivers his goods, without the least reserve, to every one who bargains with him. When all is sold, he intimates his departure; and every purchaser hurries with his goods to him; and it is not known that any one Indian ever broke his engagement. They give him a guard to carry him safe out of their territory, with all the slaves, horses, and cattle he has purchased. The savages of Brazil are faithful to their promises, and to the treaties they make with the Portuguese. Upon some occasions, they may be accused of error and wrong judgment, but never of injustice nor of duplicity.

While the earth was thinly peopled, plenty of food, procured by hunting and fishing, promoted population; but as population lessens the stock of animal food, a savage nation, increasing in numbers, must spread wider and wider for more game. Thus tribes, at first widely separated from each other, approach gradually till they become neighbours. Hence a new scene with respect to morality. Differences about their hunting-fields, about their game, about personal injuries, multiply between neighbours; and every quarrel is blown into a flame, by the aversion men naturally have to strangers. Anger, hatred, and revenge, now find vent, which formerly lay latent without an object: dissocial passions prevail without con-

 trol,

trol, because among savages morality is no match for them; and cruelty becomes predominant in the human race. Ancient history accordingly is full of enormous cruelties; witness the incursions of the northern barbarians into the Roman empire; and the incursions of Genhizcan and Tamerlane into the fertile countries of Asia, spreading destruction with fire and sword, and sparing neither man, woman, nor infant.

Malevolent passions, acquiring strength by daily exercise against persons of a different tribe, came to be vented against persons even of the same tribe; and the privilege long enjoyed by individuals of avenging the wrongs done to them, bestowed irresistible force upon such passions *. The history of ancient Greece presents nothing to the reader but usurpations, assassinations, and other horrid crimes. The names of many famous for wickedness, are still preserved; Atreus, for example, Eteocles, Alcmeon, Phedra, Clytemnestra. The story of Pelops and his descendants, is a chain of criminal horrors: during that period, parricide and incest were ordinary incidents. Euripides represents Medea vowing revenge against her husband Jason, and laying a plot to poison him. Of that infamous plot the chorus express their approbation, justifying every woman who, in like circumstances, acts the same part.

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* See Historical Law Tracts, tract 1.

The frequent incursions of northern barbarians into the Roman empire, spread desolation and ruin through the whole. The Romans, from the highest polish degenerating into savages, assumed by degrees the cruel and bloody manners of their conquerors; and the conquerors and conquered, blended into one mass, equalled the grossest barbarians of ancient times in ignorance and brutality. Clovis, King of the Franks, even after his conversion to Christianity, assassinated without remorse his nearest kinsman. The children of Clodomir, *ann.* 530, were assassinated by their two uncles. In the thirteenth century, Ezzelino de Aromano obtained the sovereignty of Padua, by massacring 12,000 of his fellow-citizens. Galeas Sforza, Duke of Milan, was assassinated *ann.* 1476 in the cathedral church of Milan, after the assassins had put up their prayers for courage to perpetrate the deed. It is a still stronger proof how low morality was in those days, that the Pope himself, Sextus IV. attempted to assassinate the two brothers, Laurent and Julien de Medicis; chusing the elevation of the host as a proper time, when the people would be busy about their devotions. Nay more, that very Pope, with unparalleled impudence, excommunicated the Florentines for doing justice upon the intended assassins. The most sacred oaths were in vain employed as a security against that horrid crime. Childebert II. King of the Franks, enticed Magnovald

to his court, by a solemn oath that he should receive no harm; and yet made no difficulty to assassinate him during the gaiety of a banquet. But these instances, however horrid, make no figure compared with the massacre of St Bartholomew, where many thousands were inhumanly and treacherously butchered. Even so late as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, assassination was not held in every case to be criminal. Many solicitous applications were made to general councils of Christian clergy, to declare it criminal in every case; but without success. Ferdinand, King of Aragon and Navarre, after repeated assassinations and acts of perfidy, obtained the appellation of *Great!* so little authority had the moral sense, during these dark and sanguinary ages.

But it is scarce necessary to mention particular instances of the overbearing power of malevolent passions during these ages. An opinion, once universal, that the innocent may be justly involved in the same punishment with the guilty, is of itself irrefragable evidence, that morality formerly had very little influence when opposed by revenge. There is no moral principle more evident, than that punishment cannot be inflicted with justice but upon the guilty; and yet in Greece, the involving of the innocent with the guilty in the same punishment, was authorised even by positive law. By an Athenian law, a man committing sacrilege, or betraying his country, was banished with all

his

his children *. And when a tyrant was put to death, his children ſuffered the ſame fate †. The puniſhment of treaſon in Macedon, was extended againſt the criminal's relations ‡. Hanno, a citizen of Carthage, formed a plot to enſlave his country, by poiſoning the whole ſenate at a banquet. He was tortured to death; and his children, with all his relations, were cut off without mercy, though they had no acceſſion to his guilt. Among the Japaneſe, a people remarkably ferocious, it is the practice to involve children and relations in the puniſhment of capital crimes. Even Cicero, the chief man for learning in the moſt enlightened period of the Roman republic, and a celebrated moraliſt, approves that practice: " Nec vero me " fugit, quam ſit acerbum parentum ſcelera filio- " rum pœnis lui: ſed hoc præclare legibus com- " paratum eſt, ut caritas liberorum amiciores pa- " rentes reipublicæ redderet § ||." In Britain, every

* Meurſius de legibus Atticis, lib. 2. cap. 2.

† Eod. lib. 2. cap. 15.

‡ Quintus Curtius, lib. 6. cap. 11.

§ " I am ſenſible of the hardſhip of puniſhing the child for " the crime of the parent: this, however, is a wiſe enactment " of our laws; for hereby the parent is bound to the intereſt " of the ſtate by the ſtrongeſt of all ties, the affection to his " offspring."

|| Ep. 12. ad Brutum.

every one knows, that murder was retaliated, not only upon the criminal and his relations, but upon his whole clan; a practice ſo common as to be diſtinguiſhed by a peculiar name, that of *deadly feud*. As late as the days of King Edmund, a law was made in England, prohibiting deadly feud, except between the relations of the perſon murdered and the murderer himſelf.

I embrace the preſent opportunity to honour the Jews, by obſerving, that they were the firſt people we read of, who had correct notions of morality with reſpect to the preſent point. The following law is expreſs: "The fathers ſhall not be put "to death for the children, neither ſhall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man "ſhall be put to death for his own ſin *." Amaziah, King of Judah, gave ſtrict obedience to that law, in avenging his father's death: "And it "came to paſs as ſoon as the kingdom was confirmed in his hand, that he ſlew his ſervants "which had ſlain the king his father. But the "children of the murderers he ſlew not; according "to that which is written in the book of the "law of Moſes †." There is an elegant paſſage in Ezekiel to the ſame purpoſe ‡: "What mean "ye, that ye uſe this proverb concerning the land "of Iſrael, ſaying, The fathers have eaten ſour "grapes,

* Deuteronomy xxiv. 16.

† 2 Kings, chap. xiv. ‡ Chap. xviii.

"grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?
"As I live, saith the Lord God, ye shall not have
"occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel.
"The soul that sinneth, it shall die: the son shall
"not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall
"the father bear the iniquity of the son; the
"righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him,
"and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon
"him." Among the Jews, however, as among other nations, there are instances without number, of involving innocent children and relations in the same punishment with the guilty. Such power has revenge, as to trample upon conscience, and upon the most express laws. Instigated with rage for Nabal's ingratitude, King David made a vow to God, not to leave alive of all who pertained to Nabal any that pisseth against the wall. And it was not any compunction of conscience that diverted him from his cruel purpose, but Nabal's beautiful wife, who pacified him *. But such contradiction between principle and practice, is not peculiar to the Jews. We find examples of it in the laws of the Roman empire. The true principle of punishment is laid down in an edict of the Emperors Arcadius and Honorius †. "Sancimus, ibi esse pœnam, ubi et noxia est. Propinquos, notos, familiares, procul a calumnia submovemus, quos reos sceleris societas non facit.

 "Nec

* 1 Samuel, chap. xxv.

† L. 22. Cod. de pœnis.

"Nec enim adfinitas vel amicitia nefarium cri-
"men admittunt. Peccata igitur suos teneant auc-
"tores: nec ulterius progrediatur metus quam
"reperiatur delictum. Hoc singulis quibusque
"judicibus intimetur *." These very Emperors, with respect to treason, which touched them nearer than other crimes, talk a very different language. After observing, that will and purpose alone without an overt act, is treason, subjecting the criminal to capital punishment and to forfeiture of all that belongs to him, they proceed in the following words †. "Filii vero ejus, quibus vitam Impera-
"toria specialiter lenitate concedimus, (paterno
"enim deberent perire supplicio, in quibus pater-
"ni, hoc est, hæreditarii criminis exempla me-
"tuuntur), a materna, vel avita, omnium etiam
"proximorum hæreditate ac successione, habe-
"antur alieni; testamentis extraneorum nihil ca-
"peant: sint perpetuo egentes et pauperes, infa-
"mia eos paterna semper comitetur, ad nullos
"prorsus honores, ad nulla sacramenta perveni-
"ant: sint postremo tales, ut his, perpetua egesta-
"te

* "We ordain, that the punishment of the crime shall ex-
"tend to the criminal alone. We hold his relations, his
"friends, and his acquaintances, unsuspected; for intimacy,
"friendship, or connection, are no proof or argument of
"guilt. The consequences of the crime shall pursue only
"its perpetrator. Let this statute be intimated to all our
"judges."

† L. 5. Cod. ad leg. Jul. majest.

" te fordentibus, fit et mors folatium et vita fup-
" plicium *."

Human nature is not fo perverfe, as without veil or difguife to punifh a perfon acknowledged to be innocent. An irregular bias of imagination, which extends the qualities of the principal to its acceffories, paves the way to that unjuft practice †. That bias, ftrengthened by indignation againft an atrocious criminal, leads the mind haftily to conclude, that all his connections are partakers of his guilt. In an enlightened age, the clearnefs of moral principles fetters the imagination from confounding the innocent with the guilty. There remain traces however of that bias, though not carried fo far as murder. The fentence pronounced againft Ravilliac for affaffinating Henry IV. of France,

* " By a fpecial extenfion of our imperial clemency, we " allow the fons of the criminal to live; although, from a rea-" fonable fufpicion of their inheriting his vicious nature, it " were not unwife to doom them to fuffer the punifhment of " their father. But it is our will, that they fhall be incapable " of all inheritance, either from the mother, the grandfather, " or any of their kindred; that they fhall be deprived of the " power of inheriting by the teftament of a ftranger; that " they fhall be abandoned to the extreme of poverty and per-" petual indigence; that the infamy of their father fhall ever " attend them, incapable of honours, and excluded from the " participation of religious rites; that fuch, in fine, fhall be " the mifery of their condition, that life fhall be a punifhment, " and death a comfort."

† Elements of Criticifm, chap. 2. fect. 5.

France, ordains, "That his houſe be erazed to "the ground, and that no other building be ever "erected upon that ſpot." Was not this in imagination puniſhing a houſe for the proprietor's crime?

Murder and aſſaſſination are not only deſtructive in themſelves, but, if poſſible, ſtill more deſtructive in their conſequences. The practice of ſhedding blood unjuſtly and often wantonly, blunts conſcience, and paves the way to every crime. This obſervation is verified in the ancient Greeks: their cruel and ſanguinary character, rendered them little regardful of the ſtrict rules of juſtice. Right was held to depend on power, among men as among wild beaſts: it was conceived to be the will of the gods, that ſuperior force ſhould be a lawful title to dominion; "for what right can "the weak have to what they cannot defend?" Were that maxim to obtain, a weak man would have no right to liberty nor to life. That impious doctrine was avowed by the Athenians, and publicly aſſerted by their ambaſſadors in a conference with the Melians, reported by Thucydides *. Many perſons act as if force and right were the ſame; but a barefaced profeſſion of ſuch a doctrine is uncommon. In the Eumenides, a tragedy of Eſchylus, Oreſtes is arraigned in the Areopagus for killing his mother. Minerva, preſident of the court, decrees in favour of the Oreſtes: and for what rea-

ſon?

* Lib. 5.

fon? "Having no mother myfelf, the murder of "a mother toucheth not me *." In the tragedy of Electra, Oreftes, confulting the Delphic oracle about means to avenge his father's murder, was enjoined by Apollo to forbear force, but to employ fraud and guile. Obedient to that injunction, Oreftes commands his tutor to fpread in Argos the news of his death, and to confirm the fame with a folemn oath. In Homer, even the great Jupiter makes no difficulty to fend a lying dream to Agamemnon, chief of the Greeks. Diffimulation is recommended by the goddefs Minerva †. Ulyffes declares his deteftation at ufing freedom with truth ‡: and yet no man deals more in feigned ftories §. In the 22d book of the Iliad, Minerva is guilty of grofs deceit and treachery to Hector. When he flies from Achilles, fhe appears to him in the fhape of his brother Deiphobus, exhorts him

* Athens, from the nature of its government, as eftablifhed by Solon, was rendered uncapable of any regular or confiftent body of laws. In every cafe, civil and criminal, the whole people were judges in the laft refort. And what fort of judges will an ignorant multitude make, who have no guide but paffion and prejudice? It is vain to make good laws, when fuch judges are the interpreters. Anacharfis, the Scythian, being prefent at an affembly of the people, faid, "It "was fingular, that in Athens, wife men pleaded caufes, and "fools determined them."

† Odyffey, Book 13.

‡ Book 14. § Book 14. Book 15.

him to turn upon Achilles, and promifes to affift him. Hector accordingly, returning to the fight, darts his lance; which rebounds from the fhield of Achilles, for by Vulcan it was made impenetrable. Hector calls upon his brother for another lance; but in vain, for Deiphobus was not there. The Greeks in Homer's time muft have been ftrangely deformed in their morals, when fuch a ftory could be relifhed *. A nation begins not to polifh nor to advance in morality, till writing be common; and writing was not known among the Greeks at the fiege of Troy. Nor were the morals of that people, as we fee, much purified for a long time after writing became common. When Plautus wrote, the Roman fyftem of morals muft have been extremely impure. In his play termed *Menæchmi*, a gentleman of fafhion having accidentally got into his hands a lady's robe with a gold clafp; inftead of returning them to the owner, endeavours to fell them without fhame or remorfe. Such a fcene would not be endured at prefent, except among pickpockets. Both the Greeks and Carthaginians

* Upon the ftory of Jupiter being deceived by Juno, in the 14th book of the Iliad, Pope fays, "That he knows not a "bolder fiction in all antiquity, nor one that has a greater air "of impiety." Pope, it would feem was little acquainted with antiquity: for fuch acts of impiety were common among the Greeks; and in particular the incident mentioned in the text, is not only more impious, but alfo a more grofs violation of the laws of morality.

thaginians were held by the Romans to be artful and cunning. The Romans continued a plain people, with much ſimplicity of manners, when the nations mentioned had made great progreſs in the arts of life; and it is a ſad truth, that morality declines in proportion as a nation poliſhes. But if the Romans were later than the Greeks and Carthaginians in the arts of life, they ſoon ſurpaſſed them in every ſort of immorality. For this change of manners, they were indebted to their rapid conqueſts. The ſanguinary diſpoſition both of the Greeks and Romans, appears from another practice, that of expoſing their infant children, which continued till humanity came in ſome meaſure to prevail. The practice continues in China to this day, the populouſneſs of the country throwing a veil over the cruelty; but from the humanity of the Chineſe, I conjecture, that the practice is rare. The Jews, a cloudy and peeviſh tribe, much addicted to bloodſhed, were miſerably defective in moral principles. Take the following examples out of an endleſs number recorded in the books of the Old Teſtament. Jael, wife of Heber, took under her protection Siſera, general of the Canaanites, and engaged her faith for his ſecurity. She put him treacherouſly to death when aſleep; and was applauded by Deborah the propheteſs for the meritorious action *. That horrid deed would probably have appeared to her in a different light, had it

* Judges iv. 5.

it been committed against Barac, general of the Israelites. David, flying from Saul, took refuge with Achish, King of Gath; and, though protected by that King, made war against the King's allies, saying, that it was against his own countrymen of Judah. "And David saved neither man nor woman alive to bring tidings to Gath. And Achish believed David, saying, He hath made his people Israel utterly to abhor him: therefore he shall be my servant for ever*." This was a complication of ingratitude, lying and treachery. Ziba, by presents to King David, and by defaming his master Mephibosheth, procured from the King a gift of his master's inheritance; though Mephibosheth had neither trimmed his beard, nor washed his clothes, from the day the King departed till he returned in peace. "And it came to pass, when Mephibosheth was come to Jerusalem to meet the king, that the king said unto him, Wherefore wentest thou not with me, Mephibosheth? And he answered, My lord, O king, my servant deceived me; for thy servant said, I will saddle me an ass, that I may ride thereon, and go to the king; because thy servant is lame, and he hath slandered thy servant unto my lord the king. But my lord the king is as an angel of God: do therefore what is good in thine eyes. For all my father's house were but dead men before my lord the king: yet "didst

* 1 Samuel xxvii. 11.

"didst thou set thy servant among them that did "eat at thine own table: what right therefore "have I to cry any more unto the king?" David could not possibly atone for his rashness, but by restoring Mephibosheth his inheritance, and punishing Ziba in an exemplary manner. But hear the sentence: "And the king said unto him, Why "speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have "said, Thou and Ziba divide the land *." The same king, after pardoning Shimei for cursing him, and swearing that he should not die; yet upon deathbed enjoined his son Solomon to put Shimei to death: "Now, therefore, hold him not guiltless; "but his hoary head bring thou down to the "grave with blood †." I wish not to be misapprehended, as intending to censure David in particular. If the best king the Jews ever had, was so miserably deficient in morality, what must be thought of the nation in general? When David was lurking to avoid the wrath of Saul, he became acquainted with Nabal, who had a great stock of cattle. "He discharged his followers," says Josephus ‡, "either for avarice, or hunger, or any "pretext whatever, to touch a single hair of "them; preaching still on the text of doing jus-"tice to all men, in conformity to the will of "God, who is not pleased with any man that co-"vets or lays violent hands on the goods of his "neighbour."

* 2 Samuel xix. 24. † 1 Kings ii. 9.

‡ Antiquities, book vi.

"neighbour." Our author proceeds to acquaint us, that Nabal having refused to supply David with provisions, and having sent back the messengers with a scoffing answer, David, in rage made a vow, that he would destroy Nabal with his house and family. Our author observes, that David's indignation against Nabal, was not so much for his ingratitude, as for the virulence of an insolent outrage against one who had never injured him. And what was the outrage? It was, says our author, that Nabal, inquiring who the said David was, and being told that he was one of the sons of Jesse, "Yes, yes", says Nabal, "your run-away servants look upon themselves to be brave fellows, "I warrant you." Strange looseness of morals! I mean not David, who was in wrath, but Josephus writing sedately in his closet. He every where celebrates David for his justice and piety, composes for him the very warm exhortation mentioned above: and yet thinks him not guilty of any wrong, in vowing to break every rule of justice and humanity, upon so slight a provocation as a scoffing expression, such as no man of temper will regard.

European nations, who originally were fierce and sanguinary like the Greeks and Jews, had the same cloudy and incorrect notions of right and wrong. It is scarce necessary to give instances, the low state of morality during the dark ages of Christianity being known to all. In the time of Louis

Louis XI. of France, promifes and engagements were utterly difregarded, till they were fanctified by a folemn oath: nor were fuch oaths long regarded; they loft their force, and were not relied on more than fimple promifes. All faith among men feemed to be at an end. Even thofe who appeared the moft fcrupulous about character, were however ready to grafp at any fubterfuge to excufe their breach of engagement. And it is a ftill clearer proof of felf-deceit, that fuch fubterfuges were frequently prepared beforehand, in order to furnifh an excufe. It was a common practice fome ages ago, to make private proteftations, which were thought fufficient to relieve men in confcience from being bound by a folemn treaty. The Scotch nation, as an ally of France, being comprehended in a treaty of peace between the French King and Edward I. of England, the latter ratified publicly the treaty, after having fecretly protefted before notaries againft the article that comprehended Scotland. Charles, afterward Emperor of Germany, during his minority, gave authority to declare publicly his acceffion to a treaty of peace, between his grandfather Maximilian and the King of France; but at the fame time protefted privately, before a notary and witneffes, "That, not-"withftanding his public acceffion to the faid "treaty, it was not his intention to be bound by "every article of it; and particularly, that the "claufe referving to the King of France the fo-

 "vereignty

" vereignty of certain territories in the Nether-
" lands, ſhould not be binding." Is it poſſible Charles could be ſo blind as not to ſee, that ſuch a proteſtation, if ſufficient to relieve from an engagement, muſt deſtroy all faith among men? Francis I. of France, while priſoner in Spain, engaged Henry VIII. of England in a treaty againſt the Emperor, ſubmitting to very hard terms in order to gain Henry's friendſhip. The King's miniſters proteſted privately againſt ſome of the articles; and the proteſt was recorded in the ſecret regiſter of the parliament of Paris, to ſerve as an excuſe in proper time, for breaking the treaty. At the marriage of Mary Queen of Scotland to the Dauphin of France, the King of France ratified every article inſiſted on by the Scotch parliament, for preſerving the independence of the nation, and for ſecuring the ſucceſſion of the crown to the houſe of Hamilton; confirming them by deeds in form and with the moſt ſolemn oaths. But Mary previouſly had been perſuaded to ſubſcribe privately three deeds, in which, failing heirs of her body, ſhe gifted the kingdom of Scotland to the King of France; declaring all promiſes to the contrary that had been extorted from her by her ſubjects, to be void. What better was this than what was practiſed by Robert, King of France, in the tenth century, to free his ſubjects from the guilt of perjury? They ſwore upon a box of relics, out of which the relics had been privately taken. Cor-
rea,

rea, a Portugueſe general, made a treaty with the King of Pegu; and it was agreed, that each party ſhould ſwear to obſerve the treaty, laying his hand upon the ſacred book of his religion. Correa ſwore upon a collection of ſongs; and thought that by that vile ſtratagem he was free from his engagement. The inhabitants of Britain were ſo looſe formerly, that a man was not reckoned ſafe in his own houſe, without a maſtiff to protect him from violence. Maſtiffs were permitted even to thoſe who dwelt within the king's foreſts; and to prevent danger to the deer, there was in England a court for *lawing* or *expeditation* of maſtives, *i. e.* for cutting off the claws of their fore-feet to prevent them from running *. The trial and condemnation of Charles I. in a pretended court of juſtice, however audacious and unconſtitutional, was an effort toward regularity and order. In the preceding age, the king would have been taken off by aſſaſſination or poiſon. Every prince in Europe had an officer, whoſe province it was to ſecure his maſter againſt poiſon. A lady was appointed to that office by Queen Elizabeth of England; and the form was, to give to each of the ſervants a mouthful to eat of the diſh he brought in. Poiſon muſt have been frequent in thoſe days, to make ſuch a regulation neceſſary. To vouch ſtill more clearly, the low ebb of morality during that period, ſeldom it happened that a man of

* Cartade Foreſta, cap. 6.

figure died fuddenly, or of an unufual difeafe, but poifon was fufpected. Men confcious of their own vitious difpofition, are prone to fufpect others. The Dauphin, fon to Francis I. of France, a youth of about eighteen, having overheated himfelf at play, took a great draught of iced water, and died of a pleurify in five days. The death was fudden, but none is more natural. The fufpicion however of poifon was univerfal; and Montecuculi, who attended the young prince, was formally condemned to death for it, and executed; for no better reafon than that he had at all times ready accefs to the prince.

Confidering the low ftate of morality where diffocial paffions bear rule, as in the fcenes now difplayed, one would require a miracle to recover mankind out of fo miferable a ftate. But, as obferved above *, Providence brings order out of confufion. The intolerable diftrefs of a ftate of things where a promife or even an oath, is a rope of fand, and where all are fet againft all †, made people at laft fenfible, that they muft either renounce fociety altogether, or qualify themfelves for it by checking their diffocial paffions. Finding from experience, that the gratification of focial affections exceeds greatly that of cruelty and revenge; men endeavouring to acquire a habit of felf-command, and of reftraining their ftormy paffions. The neceffity of fulfilling every moral duty was

* Book 2. Sketch 1. † Hobbes.

was recognized: men liſtened to conſcience, the voice of God in their hearts; and the moral ſenſe was cordially ſubmitted to, as the ultimate judge in all matters of right and wrong. Salutary laws and ſteady government contributed to perfect that glorious revolution: private conviction alone would not have been effectual, not at leaſt in many ages.

From that revolution is derived what is termed *the law of nations*, meaning certain regulations dictated by the moral ſenſe in its maturity. The laws of our nature refine gradually as our nature refines. From the putting an enemy to death in cold blood, improved nature is averſe, though ſuch practice was common while barbarity prevailed. It is held infamous to uſe poiſoned weapons, though the moral ſenſe made little oppoſition while rancour and revenge were ruling paſſions. Averſion to ſtrangers is taught to vary its object, from individuals, to the nation that is our enemy: I bear enmity againſt France; but diſlike not any one Frenchman, being conſcious that it is the duty of ſubjects to ſerve their king and country*. In diſtributing juſtice, we make no diſtinction between natives and foreigners: if any partiality be indulged, it is in favour of the helpleſs ſtranger.

 But

* In one of our ill-concerted deſcents upon France during the late war, ſignal humanity appeared, in forbearing to burn a manufactory of ſails and ropes, belonging to the king; becauſe it would have deſtroyed an adjoining building of the ſame kind belonging to a private manufacturer.

But cruelty is not the only antagoniſt to morality. There is another, leſs violent indeed, but more cunning and undermining; and that is, the hoarding appetite. Before money was introduced, that appetite was extremely faint: in the firſt ſtage of civil ſociety, men are ſatisfied with plain neceſſaries; and having theſe in plenty, they think not of providing againſt want. But money is a ſpecies of property, ſo univerſal in operation, and ſo permanent in value, as to rouſe the appetite for hoarding: love of money excites induſtry; and the many beautiful productions of induſtry, magnificent houſes, ſplendid gardens, rich garments, inflame the appetite to an extreme. The people of Whidah, in Guinea, are much addicted to pilfering. Bozman was told by the king, "That his "ſubjects were not like thoſe of Ardrah, who on "the ſlighteſt umbrage will poiſon an European. "This, ſays he, you have no reaſon to apprehend "here: but take care of your goods; for ſo ex-"pert are my people at thieving, that they will "ſteal from you while you are looking on." In the thirteenth century, ſo obſcured was the moral ſenſe by rapacity and avarice, that robbery on the highway, and the coining falſe money, were in Germany held to be privileges of great lords. Cicero ſomewhere talks of banditti who infeſted the roads near Rome, and made travelling extremely dangerous. In the days of Henry III. of England, the Chronicle of Dunſtable reports, that the country

country was in great diſorder by theft and robbery, that men were not ſecure in their own houſes, and that whole villages were often plundered by bands of robbers, though the kingdom was otherwiſe at peace. Many of the King's own houſehold were found to be robbers; and excuſed themſelves, that having received no wages from the King, they were obliged to rob for ſubſiſtence. That perjury was common in the city of London, eſpecially among jurymen, makes a preamble in more than one ſtatute of Henry VII. In *the Dance of Death*, tranſlated from the French in the ſaid king's reign with additions adapted to Engliſh manners, a juryman is introduced, who, influenced by bribes, had frequently given a falſe verdict. And the Sheriff was often ſuſpected as acceſſory to the crime, by returning for jurymen perſons of a bad character. Carew, in his account of Cornwall, ſays, that it was an ordinary article in an attorney's bill, to charge *pro amicitia vicecomitis* *. Perjury in jurors of the city of London is greatly complained of. Stow informs us, that, in the year 1468, many jurors of that city were puniſhed; and papers fixed on their heads declaring their offence of being corrupted by the parties to the ſuit. He complains of that corruption as flagrant in the reign of Elizabeth, when he wrote his account of London, Fuller, in his Engliſh Worthies, mentions it as a proverbial ſay-

* "For the friendſhip of the ſheriff."

ing, "That London juries hang half, and fave "half." Grafton, in his Chronicle, mentions, that the chancellor of the Bifhop of London being indicted for murder, the Bifhop wrote a letter to Cardinal Wolfey, begging his interpofition for having the profecution ftopt, "becaufe London "juries were fo corrupted, that they would find "Abel guilty of the murder of Cain." Mr Hume, in the firft volume of his Hiftory of England, (page 417. edition 1762), cites many inftances from Madox of bribes given for perverting juftice. In that period, the morals of the low people were in other particulars equally loofe. We learn from Strype's Annals *, that in the county of Somerfet alone, forty perfons were executed in one year for robbery, theft, and other felonies, thirty-five burnt in the hand, thirty-feven whipped, one hundred and eighty-three difcharged, though moft wicked and defperate perfons; and yet that the fifth part of the felonies committed in that county were not brought to trial, either from cunning in the felons, indolence in the magiftrate, or foolifh lenity in the people; that other counties were in no better condition, and many in a worfe; and that commonly there were three or four hundred able-bodied vagabonds in every county, who lived by theft and rapine. Harrifon computes, that in the reign of Henry VIII. feventy-two thoufand thieves and rogues were hanged; and that in Elizabeth's time there

* Vol. iv.

there were only hanged yearly between three and four hundred for theft and robbery. At prefent, there are not forty hanged in a year for thefe crimes. The fame author reports, that in the reign of Elizabeth, there were computed to be in England ten thoufand gypfies. In the year 1601, complaints were made in parliament, of the rapine of the juftices of peace; and a member faid, that this magiftrate was an animal, who, for half-a-dozen of chickens, would dipenfe with a dozen of penal ftatutes. The low people in England are greatly improved in their morals fince the days of Elizabeth. Laying afide London, there are few places in the world where the common people are more orderly and honeft. But we muft not conclude, that England has gained much in point of morality. It has loft more by the luxury and loofe manners of its nobles, than it has gained by good difcipline among their inferiors. The undifciplined manners of our forefathers in Scotland, made a law neceffary, that whoever intermeddled irregularly with the goods of a deceafed perfon, fhould be fubjected to pay all his debts, however extenfive. A due fubmiffion to legal authority, has in effect abrogated that fevere law; and it is now fcarce ever heard of.

To control the hoarding-appetite, which when inflamed is the bane of civil fociety, the God of nature has provided two efficacious principles; the moral fenfe, and the fenfe of property. The hoard-

ing-

ing-appetite, it is true, is more and more inflamed by beautiful productions in the progress of art: but, on the other hand, the senses mentioned, arrived at maturity, have a commanding influence over the actions of men; and, when cherished in a good government, are a sufficient counterbalance to the hoarding-appetite. The ancient Egyptians enjoyed for ages the blessings of good government; and moral principles were among them carried to a greater degree of refinement than at present even in our courts of equity. It was made the duty of every one, to succour those who were unjustly attacked: even passengers were not exempted. A regulation among them, that a man could not be imprisoned for debt, was well suited to the tenor of their laws and manners: it could not have taken place but among an honest and industrious people. In old Rome, though remarkable for temperance and austerity of manners, a debtor could be imprisoned, and even sold as a slave, for payment of the debt; but the Patricians were the creditors, and the poor Plebeians were held in woful subjection*. The moderation of the

* A bankrupt in England who pays three-fourths of his debt, and obtains a certificate of his good behaviour, is discharged of all the debts contracted by him before his bankruptcy. Such regulation was perhaps not unsuitable to the moderation and frugality of the period when it was made. But luxury and external show, have now become our ruling passions; and to supply our extravagance, money must be procured

the inhabitants of Hamburgh, and their public ſpirit kept in vigour by a free government, preſerve morality

procured at any rate. Trade in particular has degenerated into a ſpecies of gaming; men venturing their all, in hopes of a lucky hit to elevate them above their neighbours. And did they only venture their own, the caſe would not be deplorable: they venture all they can procure upon credit; and by that means, reduce to beggary many an innocent family: with reſpect to themſelves, they know the worſt, which is to be cleared from their debts by a certificate. The morals of our people are indeed at ſo low an ebb, as to require the moſt ſevere laws againſt bankruptcy. When a man borrows a ſum, it is implied in the covenant, that all his effects, preſent and future, ſhall lie open to the creditor; for which reaſon, it is contradictory to juſtice, that the creditor ſhould be forced to diſcharge the debt, without obtaining complete payment. Many debtors, it is true, deſerve favour; but it ought to be left to the humanity of creditors, and not be forced from them by law. A debtor, at the ſame time, may be ſafely left to the humanity of his creditors: for if he have conducted his affairs with ſtrict integrity, and with any degree of prudence, there will ſcarce be found one man ſo hard hearted, as to ſtand out againſt the laudable and benevolent intentions of his fellow-creditors. Nay, if he have any regard to character, he dare not ſtand out: he would be held as a monſter, and be abhorred by all the world. To leave a bankrupt thus to the mercy of his creditors, would produce the moſt ſalutary effects. It would excite men to be ſtrictly juſt in their dealings, and put an end to gaming, ſo deſtructive to credit; becauſe miſbehaviour in any of theſe particulars would ſet the whole creditors againſt their debtor, and leave him no hope of favour. In the late bankrupt-ſtatute for Scotland, accordingly, the clauſe concerning the certificate was wiſely left out, as unſuitable to the depraved manners of the preſent time.

morality among them entire from taint or corruption. I give an illuſtrious inſtance. Inſtead of a tax upon trade or riches, every merchant puts privately into the public cheſt, what he thinks ought to be his contribution: the total ſum ſeldom falls ſhort of expectation; and among that numerous body of men, not one is ſuſpected of contributing leſs than his proportion. But luxury has not yet got footing in that city. A climate not kindly and a ſoil not fertile, enured the Swiſs to temperance and to virtue. Patriotiſm continues their ruling paſſion: they are fond of ſerving their country; and are honeſt and faithful to each other: a law-ſuit among them is a wonder; and a door is ſeldom ſhut, unleſs to keep out cold.

The hurtful effects of the hoarding-appetite upon individuals, make no figure compared with what it has upon the public, in every ſtate enriched by conqueſt or by commerce; which I have had more than one opportunity to mention. Overflowing riches unequally diſtributed, multiply artificial wants beyond all bounds: they eradicate patriotiſm: they foſter luxury, ſenſuality, and ſelfiſhneſs, which are commonly gratified at the expence even of juſtice and honour. The Athenians were early corrupted by opulence; to which every thing was made ſubſervient. "It is an oracle," ſays the chorus in the Agamemnon of Eſchylus, "that is not purchaſed with money." During the infancy of a nation, vice prevails from imbe-

cillity

cillity in the moral ſenſe: in the decline of a nation, it prevails from the corruption of affluence.

In a ſmall ſtate, there is commonly much virtue at home, and much violence abroad. The Romans were to their neighbours more baneful than famine or peſtilence; but their patriotiſm produced great integrity at home. An oath, when given to fortify an engagement with a fellow-citizen, was more ſacred at Rome than in any other part of the world *. The cenſorian office cannot ſucceed but among a virtuous people; becauſe its rewards and puniſhments have no influence but upon thoſe who are aſhamed of vice †. As ſoon as Aſiatic opulence and luxury prevailed in Rome, ſelfiſhneſs, ſenſuality, and avarice, formed the character of the Romans; and the cenſorian power was at an end. Such relaxation of morals enſued, as to make a law neceſſary, prohibiting the cuſtody of an infant to be given to the heir, for fear of murder. And for the ſame reaſon, it was held unlawful to make a covenant *de hæreditate viventis*. Theſe regulations prove the Romans to have been groſsly corrupt. Our law is different in both articles; becauſe

* L'Eſprit des loix, liv. 8. ch. 13.

† In the fifteenth century, the French clergy from the pulpit cenſured public tranſactions, and even the conduct of their king, as our Britiſh clergy did in the days of Charles I. and II. They aſſumed the privilege of a Roman cenſor; but they were not men of ſuch authority as to do any good in a corrupted nation.

becaufe it entertains not the fame bad opinion of the people whom it governs *. Domitius Enobarbus and Appius Pulcher were confuls of Rome in the 699th year; and Memmius and Calvinus were candidates for fucceeding them in that office. It was agreed among thefe four worthy gentlemen, that they fhould mutually affift each other. The confuls engaged to promote the election of Memmius and Calvinus: and they, on the other hand, fubfcribed a bond, obliging themfelves, under a penalty of about L. 3000 Sterling, to procure three augurs, who fhould atteft, that they were prefent in the comitia when a law paffed invefting the confuls with military command in their provinces; and alfo obliging themfelves to produce three perfons of confular rank, to depofe, that they were in the number of thofe who figned a decree, conferring on the confuls the ufual proconfular appointments. And yet the law made in the comitia, and the decree in the fenate, were pure fictions. Infamous as this tranfaction was, Memmius, to anfwer fome political purpofe, was not afhamed to divulge it to the fenate. This fame

* In the beginning of the prefent century, attorneys and agents were fo little relied on for honefty and integrity, as to be difqualified by the Court of Seffion from being factors on the eftates of bankrupts, (Act of Sederunt, 23d November 1710). At prefent, the factors chofen are commonly of that profeffion, writers or agents; and it appears from experience, that they make the beft factors. Such improvement in morals, in fo fhort a time, has not many parallels.

ſame Memmius, however, continued to be Cicero's correſpondent, and his profeſſed friend. *Proh tempora! proh mores!* But the paſſion for power and riches was at that time prevalent; and the principles of morality were very little regarded.

It cannot be diſſembled, that ſelfiſhneſs, ſenſuality, and avarice, muſt in England be the fruits of great opulence, as in every other country; and that morality cannot maintain its authority againſt ſuch undermining antagoniſts. Cuſtomhouſe-oaths have become ſo familiar among us, as to be ſwallowed without a wry face; and is it certain, that bribery and perjury in electing parliament-members, are not approaching to the ſame cool ſtate? In the infancy of morality, a promiſe makes but a ſlight impreſſion: to give it force, it is commonly accompanied with many ceremonies*; and in treaties between ſovereigns, even theſe ceremonies are not relied on without a ſolemn oath. When morality arrives at maturity, the oath is thought unneceſſary; and at preſent, morality is ſo much on the decline, that a ſolemn oath is no more relied on, than a ſimple promiſe was originally. Laws have been made to prevent ſuch immorality, but in vain: becauſe none but patriots have an intereſt to ſupport them; and when patriotiſm is baniſhed by corruption, there is no remaining ſpring in government to make them effectual. The ſtatutes made againſt gaming, and againſt bribery and

* See Hiſtorical Law Tracts, Tract ii.

corruption in elections, have no authority over a degenerate people. Nothing is ſtudied, but how to evade the penalties; and ſuppoſing ſtatutes to be made without end for preventing known evaſions, new evaſions will ſpring up in their ſtead. The miſery is, that ſuch laws, if they prove abortive, are never innocent with regard to conſequences; for nothing is more ſubverſive of morality as well as of patriotiſm, than a habit of diſregarding the laws of our country *.

But

* Lying and perjury are not in every caſe equally criminal; at leaſt are not commonly reckoned ſo. Lying or perjury, in order to injure a man, is held highly criminal; and the greater the hurt, the greater the crime. To relieve from puniſhment, few boggle at a lie or at perjury; ſincerity is not even expected; and hence the practice of torture. Many men are not ſcrupulous about oaths, when they have no view but to obtain juſtice to themſelves: the Jacobites, that they might not be deprived of their privileges as Britiſh ſubjects, made no great difficulty to ſwallow oaths to the preſent government, though in them it was perjury. It is dangerous to withdraw the ſmalleſt peg in the moral edifice; for the whole will totter and tumble. Men creep on to vice by degrees. Perjury, in order to ſupport a friend, has become cuſtomary of late years; witneſs fictitious qualifications in the electors of parliament-men, which are made effectual by perjury; yet ſuch is the degeneracy of the preſent times, that no man is the worſe thought of upon that account. We muſt not flatter ourſelves that the poiſon will reach no farther. A man, who boggles not at perjury to ſerve a friend, will in time become ſuch an adept, as to commit perjury in order to ruin a friend when he becomes an enemy.

But pride ſometimes happily interpoſes to ſtem the tide of corruption. The poor are not aſhamed to take a bribe from the rich; nor weak ſtates from thoſe that are powerful, diſguiſed only under the name of *ſubſidy* or *penſion*. Both France and England have been in the practice of ſecuring the alliance of neighbouring princes by penſions; and it is natural in the miniſters of a penſioned prince, to receive a gratification for keeping their maſter to his engagement. England never was at any time ſo inferior to France, as to ſuffer her king openly to accept a penſion from the French king, whatever private tranſactions might be between the kings themſelves. But the miniſters of England thought it no diſparagement, to receive penſions from France. Every miniſter of Edward IV. of England received a penſion from Louis XI.; and they made no difficulty of granting a receipt for the ſum. The old Earl of Warwick, ſays Commines, was the only exception: he took the money, but refuſed a receipt. Cardinal Wolſey had a penſion both from the Emperor and from the King of France: and his maſter Henry was vain to find his miniſter ſo much regarded by the firſt powers in Europe. During the reigns of Charles II. and of his brother James, England made ſo deſpicable a figure, that the miniſters accepted penſions from Louis XIV. A king deficient in virtue, is never well ſerved. King Charles, moſt diſgracefully, accepted a penſion from France:

what ſcruple could his miniſters have? Britain, governed by a king eminently virtuous and patriotic, makes at preſent ſo great a figure, that even the loweſt miniſter would diſdain a penſion from any foreign prince. Men formerly were ſo blind, as not to ſee that a penſion creates a bias in a miniſter, againſt his maſter and his country. At preſent, men clearly ſee, that a foreign penſion to a miniſter is no better than a bribe; and it would be held ſo by all the world.

In a nation enriched by conqueſt or commerce, where ſelfiſh paſſions always prevail, it is difficult to ſtem the tide of immorality: the decline of virtue may be retarded by wholeſome regulations; but no regulations will ever reſtore it to its meridian vigour. Marcus Aurelius, Emperor of Rome, cauſed ſtatues to be made of all the brave men who figured in the Germanic war. It has long been a practice in China, to honour perſons eminent for virtue, by feaſting them annually at the Emperor's expence. A late Emperor made an improvement: he ordered reports to be ſent him annually, of men and women, who when alive had been remarkable for public ſpirit or private virtue, in order that monuments might be erected to their memory. The following report is one of many that were ſent to the Emperor. "According to the order of your Majeſty, for erecting "monuments to the honour of women, who have "been celebrated for continence, for filial piety,

"or

" or for purity of manners, the viceroy of Can-
" ton reports, that in the town of Sinhoei, a beau-
" tiful young woman, named *Leang*, ſacrificed her
" life to ſave her chaſtity. In the fifteenth year
" of our Emperor Canghi, ſhe was dragged by
" pirates into their ſhip; and having no other
" way to eſcape their brutal luſt, ſhe threw herſelf
" headlong into the ſea. Being of opinion, that
" to prefer honour before life is an example wor-
" thy of imitation, we purpoſe, according to your
" Majeſty's order, to erect a triumphal arch for
" that young woman, and to engrave her ſtory
" upon a large ſtone, that it may be preſerved in
" perpetual remembrance." At the foot of the
report is written, *The Emperor approves*. Pity it
is, that ſuch regulations ſhould ever prove abort-
ive, for their purpoſe is excellent. But they would
need angels to carry them on. Every deviation
from a juſt ſelection enervates them; and fre-
quent deviations render them a ſubject of ridicule.
But how are deviations to be prevented, when men
are the judges? Thoſe who diſtribute the rewards
have friends or flatterers; and thoſe of greater
merit will be neglected. Like the cenſorian power
in Rome, ſuch regulations, after many abuſes, will
ſink into contempt.

Two errors, which infeſted morality in dark
times, have occaſioned much injuſtice; and I am
not certain, that they are yet entirely eradicated.
The firſt is an opinion, That an action derives its

quality of right and wrong from the event, without regard to intention. The other is, That the end juſtifies the means; or, in other words, That means otherwiſe unlawful, may be lawfully employed to bring about a good end. With an account of theſe two errors, I ſhall cloſe the preſent hiſtorical ſketch.

That intention is the circumſtance which qualifies an action and its author, to be criminal or innocent, is made evident in the firſt part of the preſent ſketch; and is now admitted to be ſo by every moral writer. But rude and barbarous nations ſeldom carry their thoughts beyond what falls under their external ſenſes: they conclude an action to be right that happens to do good, and an action to be wrong that happens to do harm; without ever thinking of motives, of will, of intention, or of any circumſtance that is not obvious to eye-ſight. From many paſſages in the Old Teſtament it appears, that the external act only, with its conſequences, was regarded. Iſaac, imitating his father Abraham, made his wife Rebecca paſs for his ſiſter. Abimelech, King of the Philiſtines, having diſcovered the impoſture, ſaid to Iſaac, "What is this thou haſt done unto us? One of "the people might lightly have lain with thy "wife, and thou ſhouldeſt have brought guiltineſs "upon us*." Jonathan was condemned to die for tranſgreſſing a prohibition he had never heard of.

* Geneſis, chap. xxvi.

of*. A ſin of ignorance, *i. e.* an action done without ill intention, required a ſacrifice of expiation †. Saul, defeated by the Philiſtines, fell on his own ſword: the wound not being mortal, he prevailed on a young Amalekite, to pull out the ſword, and to diſpatch him with it. Joſephus ‡ ſays, that David ordered the criminal to be delivered up to juſtice as a regicide.

The Greeks appear to have wavered greatly about intention, ſometimes holding it eſſential to a crime, and ſometimes diſregarding it as a circumſtance of no moment. Of theſe contradictory opinions, we have pregnant evidence in the two tragedies of Oedipus; the firſt taking it for granted, that a crime conſiſts entirely in the external act and its conſequences; the other holding intention to be indiſpenſable. Oedipus had killed his father Laius, and married his mother Jocaſta; but without any criminal intention, being ignorant of his relation to them. And yet hiſtory informs us, that the gods puniſhed the Thebans with peſtilence, for ſuffering a wretch ſo groſsly criminal to live. Sophocles, author of both tragedies, puts the following words in the mouth of Tireſias the prophet.

> ——— Know then,
> That Oedipus, in ſhameful bonds united,
> With

* 1 Samuel, xiv. 44. † Leviticus, chap. iv.

‡ Book 3. of Antiquities.

With thoſe he loves, unconſcious of his guilt,
Is yet moſt guilty.

And that doctrine is eſpouſed by Ariſtotle in a later period; who holding Oedipus to have been deeply criminal, though without intention, is of opinion, that a more proper ſubject for tragedy never was brought upon the ſtage. Nay, as a philoſopher he talks currently of any involuntary crime. Oreſtes, in Euripides, acknowledges himſelf to be guilty in killing his mother; yet aſſerts with the ſame breath, that his crime was inevitable, a neceſſary crime, a crime commanded by religion.

In Oepidus Coloneus, the other tragedy mentioned, a very different opinion is maintained. A defence is made for that unlucky man, agreeable to ſound moral principles; that, having had no bad intention, he was entirely innocent; and that his misfortunes ought to be aſcribed to the wrath of the gods.

Thou who upbraid'ſt me thus for all my woes,
Murder and inceſt, which againſt my will,
I had committed; ſo it pleas'd the gods,
Offended at my race for former crimes.
But I am guiltleſs: can'ſt thou name a fault
Deſerving this? For, tell me, was it mine,
When to my father, Phœbus did declare,
That he ſhould one day periſh by the hand
Of his own child; was Oedipus to blame,

Who

> Who had no being then? If, born at length
> To wretchedneſs, he met his ſire unknown,
> And ſlew him; that involuntary deed
> Can'ſt thou condemn? And for my fatal marriage,
> Doſt thou not bluſh to name it? was not ſhe
> Thy ſiſter, ſhe who bore me, ignorant
> And guiltleſs woman! afterwards my wife,
> And mother to my children? What ſhe did, ſhe did unknowing.
> But, not for that, nor for my murder'd father,
> Have I deſerv'd thy bitter taunts: for, tell me,
> Thy life attack'd, wouldſt thou have ſtaid to aſk
> Th' aſſaſſin, if he were thy father? No;
> Self-love would urge thee to revenge the inſult.
> Thus was I drove to ill by th' angry gods;
> This, ſhould my father's ſoul reviſit earth,
> Himſelf would own, and pity Oedipus.

Again, in the fourth act, the following prayer is put up for Oepidus by the chorus:

> ———— O grant,
> That not oppreſs'd by tort'ring pain,
> Beneath the ſtroke of death he linger long;
> But ſwift, with eaſy ſteps, deſcend to Styx's drear abode;
> For he hath led a life of toil and pain;
> May the juſt gods repay his undeſerved woe.

The audience was the ſame in both plays. Did they think Oepidus to be guilty in the one play, and innocent in the other? If they did not, how could both plays be reliſhed? if they did, they muſt have been groſsly ſtupid.

The ſtatues of a Roman Emperor were held ſo ſacred, that to treat them with any contempt was high treaſon. This ridiculous opinion was carried ſo far out of common ſenſe, that a man was held guilty of high treaſon, if a ſtone thrown by him happened accidentally to touch one of theſe ſtatues. And the law continued in force till abrogated by a reſcript of Severus Antoninus *.

In England, ſo little was intention regarded, that caſual homicide, and even homicide in ſelf-defence, were capitally puniſhed. It requires ſtrong evidence to vouch ſo abſurd a law; and I have the ſtrongeſt, viz. the act 52d Henry III. cap. 26. converting the capital puniſhment into a forfeiture of moveables. The ſame abſurdity continued much longer to be law in Scotland. By act 19. Parl. 1649, renewed act 22. Parl. 1661, the capital puniſhment is converted to impriſonment, or a fine to the wife and children. In a period ſo late as the Reſtoration, ſtrange blindneſs it was, not to be ſenſible, that homicide in ſelf-defence, being a lawful act juſtified by the ſtricteſt rules of morality, ſubjects not a man to puniſhment, more than the defending his property againſt a robber; and that caſual homicide, meaning homicide committed innocently without ill intention, may ſubject him to reparation, but never to any puniſhment, mild or ſevere.

The

* L. 5. ad Leg. Jul. Majeſt.

The Jesuits in their doctrines seem to rest on the external act, disregarding intention. It is with them a matter of perfect indifference, from what motive men obey the laws of God; consequently that the service of those who obey from fear of punishment, is no less acceptable to the Deity, than of those who obey from a principle of love.

The other error mentioned above, is, That the end justifies the means. In defence of that proposition, it is urged, that the character of the means is derived from the end; that every action must be right which contributes to a good end; and that every action must be wrong which contributes to an ill end. According to this reasoning, it is right to assassinate a man who is a declared or concealed enemy to his country. It is right to rob a rich man, in order to relieve a person in want. What becomes then of property, which by all is held inviolable? It is totally unhinged. The proposition then is untenable as far as light can be drawn from reason. At the same time, the tribunal of reason may be justly declined in this case. Reason is the only touchstone of truth and falsehood: but the moral sense is the only touchstone of right and wrong. And to maintain, that the qualities of right and wrong are discoverable by reason, is no less absurd than that truth and falsehood are discoverable by the moral sense. The moral sense dictates, that on no pretext whatever is it lawful

to

to do an act of injuftice, or any wrong *: and men, confcious that the moral fenfe governs in matters of right and wrong, fubmit implicitly to its dictates. Influenced, however, by the reafoning mentioned, men, during the nonage of the moral fenfe, did wrong currently in order to bring about a good end; witnefs pretended miracles and forged writings, urged without referve by every fect of Chriftians againft their antagonifts. And I am forry to obferve, that the error is not entirely eradicated: miffionaries employed in converting infidels to the true faith, are little fcrupulous about the means: they make no difficulty to feign prodigies, in order to convert thofe who are not moved by argument. Such pious frauds tend to fap the very foundations of morality.

* See the firft part of this Sketch, Sect. 3. at the end.

SKETCH

SKETCH III.

PRINCIPLES AND PROGRESS OF THEOLOGY.

AS no other ſcience can vie with theology, either in dignity or importance, it juſtly claims to be a favourite ſtudy with every perſon endued with true taſte and ſolid judgment. From the time that writing was invented, natural religion has employed pens without number; and yet in no language is there found a connected hiſtory of it. The preſent work will only admit a ſlight ſketch: which I ſhall glory in, however imperfect, if it excite any one of ſuperior talents to undertake a complete hiſtory.

CHAP. I.

Exiſtence of a Deity.

THAT there exiſt beings, one or many, powerful above the human race, is a propoſition univerſally admitted as true, in all ages, and among all

all nations. I boldly call it univerſal, notwithſtanding what is reported of ſome groſs ſavages; for reports that contradict what is acknowledged to be general among men, require more able vouchers than a few illiterate voyagers. Among many ſavage tribes, there are no words but for objects of external ſenſe: is it ſurpriſing, that ſuch people are incapable to expreſs their religious perceptions, or any perception of internal ſenſe? and from their ſilence can it be fairly preſumed, that they have no ſuch perception*? The conviction that men have of ſuperior powers in every country where there are words to expreſs it, is ſo well vouched, that in fair reaſoning it ought to be taken for granted among the few tribes where language is deficient. Even the groſſeſt idolatry affords evidence of that conviction. No nation can be ſo brutiſh as to worſhip a ſtock or a ſtone, merely as ſuch: the viſible object is always imagined to be connected with ſome inviſible power; and the worſhip paid to the former, is as repreſenting the latter, or as in ſome manner connected with it. Every family among

* In the language even of Peru, there is not a word for expreſſing an abſtract idea, ſuch as *time*, *endurance*, *ſpace*, *exiſtence*, *ſubſtance*, *matter*, *body*. It is no leſs defective in expreſſing moral ideas, ſuch as *virtue*, *juſtice*, *gratitude*, *liberty*. The Yameos, a tribe on the river Oroonoko, deſcribed by Condamine, uſed the word *poettarraroincouroac* to expreſs the number three, and have no word for a greater number. The Braſilian language is nearly as barren.

among the ancient Lithuanians, entertained a real ſerpent as a houſehold-god; and the ſame practice is at preſent univerſal among the Negroes in the kingdom of Whidah: it is not the ſerpent that is worſhipped, but ſome deity imagined to reſide in it. The ancient Egyptians were not idiots, to pay divine honours to a bull or a cat, as ſuch: the divine honours were paid to a deity, as reſiding in theſe animals. The ſun is to man a familiar object: being frequently obſcured by clouds, and totally eclipſed during night, a ſavage naturally conceives it to be a great fire, ſometimes flaming bright, ſometimes obſcured, and ſometimes extinguiſhed. Whence then ſun-worſhip, once univerſal among ſavages? Plainly from the ſame cauſe: it is not properly the ſun that is worſhipped, but a deity who is ſuppoſed to dwell in that luminary.

Taking it then for granted, that our conviction of ſuperior powers has been long univerſal, the important queſtion is, From what cauſe it proceeds. A conviction ſo univerſal and ſo permanent, cannot proceed from chance; but muſt have a cauſe operating conſtantly and invariably upon all men in all ages. Philoſophers, who believe the world to be eternal and ſelf-exiſtent, and imagine it to be the only deity, though without intelligence, endeavour to account for our conviction of ſuperior powers, from the terror that thunder and other elementary convulſions raiſe in ſavages; and

and thence conclude that ſuch belief is no evidence of a deity. Thus Lucretius *,

> Præterea, cui non animus formidine divum
> Contrahitur? cui non conripunt membra pavore,
> Fulminis horribili cum plaga torrida tellus
> Contremit, et magnum percurrunt murmura cœlum †?

And Petronius Arbiter,

> Primus in orbe deos fecit timor: ardua cœlo
> Fulmina quum caderent diſcuſſaque mœnia flammis,
> Atque ictus flagraret Athos ‡.

It will readily be yielded to theſe gentlemen, that ſavages, groſsly ignorant of cauſes and effects, are apt to take fright at every unuſual appearance, and to think that ſome malignant being is the cauſe. And if they mean only, that the firſt perception of deity among ſavages is occaſioned by fear, I heartily ſubſcribe to their opinion. But if they mean, that ſuch perceptions proceed from fear ſolely,

* Lib. 5.

† What man can boaſt that firm undaunted ſoul,
That hears, unmov'd, when thunder ſhakes the pole;
Nor ſhrinks with fear of an offended pow'r,
When lightnings flaſh, and ſtorms and tempeſts roar?

‡ When dread convulſions rock'd the lab'ring earth,
And livid clouds firſt gave the thunder birth,
Inſtinctive fear within the human breaſt
The firſt ideas of a God impreſs'd.

ſolely, without having any other cauſe, I wiſh to be informed from what ſource is derived the belief we have of benevolent deities. Fear cannot be the ſource: and it will be ſeen anon, that tho' malevolent deities were firſt recogniſed among ſavages, yet that in the progreſs of ſociety, the exiſtence of benevolent deities was univerſally believed. The fact is certain; and therefore fear is not the ſole cauſe of our believing the exiſtence of ſuperior beings.

It is beſide to me evident, that the belief even of malevolent deities, once univerſal among all the tribes of men, cannot be accounted for from fear ſolely. I obſerve, firſt, That there are many men, to whom an eclipſe, an earthquake, and even thunder, are unknown: Egypt, in particular, though the country of ſuperſtition, is little or not at all acquainted with the two latter; and in Peru, though its government was a theocracy, thunder is not known. Nor do ſuch appearances ſtrike terror into every one who is acquainted with them. The univerſality of the belief, muſt then have ſome cauſe more univerſal than fear. I obſerve next, That if the belief were founded ſolely on fear, it would die away gradually as men improve in the knowledge of cauſes and effects: inſtruct a ſavage, that thunder, an eclipſe, an earthquake, proceed from natural cauſes, and are not threatenings of an incenſed deity; his fear of malevolent beings will vaniſh; and with it his belief in them,

them, if founded ſolely on fear. Yet the direct contrary is true; in proportion as the human underſtanding ripens, our conviction of ſuperior powers, or of a Deity, turns more and more firm and authoritative; which will be made evident in the chapter immediately following.

Philoſophers of more enlarged views and of deeper penetration, may be inclined to think, that the operations of nature and the government of this world, which loudly proclaim a Deity, may be ſufficient to account for the univerſal belief of ſuperior powers. And to give due weight to the argument, I ſhall relate a converſation between a Greenlander and a Daniſh miſſionary, mentioned by Crantz in his Hiſtory of Greenland. "It is true," ſays the Greenlander, "we were ignorant Hea-
"thens, and knew little of a God, till you came.
"But you muſt not imagine, that no Greenlander
"thinks about theſe things. A kajak *, with all
"its tackle and implements, cannot exiſt but by
"the labour of man; and one who does not un-
"derſtand it, would ſpoil it. But the meaneſt
"bird requires more ſkill than the beſt kajak;
"and no man can make a bird. There is ſtill
"more ſkill required to make a man: by whom
"then was he made? He proceeded from his pa-
"rents, and they from their parents. But ſome
"muſt have been the firſt parents: whence did
"they proceed? Common report ſays, that they
"grew

* A Greenland boat.

" grew out of the earth: if fo, why do not men
" ftill grow out of the earth? And from whence
" came the earth itfelf, the fun, the moon, the
" ftars? Certainly there muft be fome being who
" made all thefe things, a being more wife than
" the wifeft man." The reafoning here from effects to their caufes is ftated with great precifion; and were all men equally penetrating with the Greenlander, fuch reafoning might perhaps be fufficient to account for the conviction of a Deity, univerfally fpread among favages. But fuch penetration is a rare quality among favages; and yet the conviction of fuperior powers is univerfal, not excepting even the groffeft favages, who are altogether incapable of reafoning like our Greenland philofopher. Natural hiftory has made fo rapid a progrefs of late years, and the finger of God is fo vifible to us in the various operations of nature, that we do not readily conceive how even favages can be ignorant: but it is a common fallacy in reafoning, to judge of others by what we feel in ourfelves. And to give jufter notions of the condition of favages, I take liberty to introduce the Wogultzoi, a people in Siberia, exhibiting a ftriking picture of favages in their natural ftate. That people were baptized at the command of Prince Gagarin, governor of the province; and Laurent Lange, in his relation of a journey from Peterfburgh to Pekin *anno* 1715, gives the following account of their converfion. "I had

 "curiofity,"

" curiosity," says he, " to question them about
" their worship before they embraced Christianity.
" They said, that they had an idol hung upon a
" tree, before which they prostrated themselves,
" raising their eyes to heaven, and howling with
" a loud voice. They could not explain what
" they meant by howling; but only, that every
" man howled in his own fashion. Being interro-
" gated, Whether, in raising their eyes to heaven,
" they knew that a god is there, who sees all the
" actions, and even the thoughts of men; they
" answered simply, That heaven is too far above
" them to know whether a god be there or not;
" and that they had no care but to provide meat
" and drink. Another question being put, Whe-
" ther they had not more satisfaction in worship-
" ping the living God, than they formerly had in
" the darkness of idolatry; they answered, We
" see no great difference, and we do not break our
" heads about such matters." Judge how little
capable such ignorant savages are, to reason from
effects to their causes, and to trace a Deity from
the operations of nature. It may be added with
great certainty, that could they be made in any
degree to conceive such reasoning, yet so weak and
obscure would their conviction be, as to rest there
without moving them to any sort of worship;
which however among savages goes hand in hand
with the conviction of superior powers.

If

If fear be a caufe altogether infufficient for our conviction of a Deity, univerfal among all tribes; and if reafoning from effects to their caufes can have no influence upon ignorant favages; what other caufe is there to be laid hold of? One ftill remains, and imagination cannot figure another: to make this conviction univerfal, the image of the Deity muft be ftamped upon the mind of every human being, the ignorant equally with the knowing: nothing lefs is fufficient. And the original perception we have of Deity, muft proceed from an internal fenfe, which may be termed the *fenfe of Deity*.

Included in the fenfe of Deity, is the duty we are under to worfhip him. And to enforce that duty, the principle of devotion is made a part of our nature. All men accordingly agree in worfhipping fuperior beings, however they may differ in the mode of worfhip. And the univerfality of fuch worfhip, proves devotion to be an innate principle *.

The perception we have of being accountable agents, arifes from another branch of the fenfe of Deity. We expect approbation from the Deity when we do right; and dread punifhment from him when guilty of any wrong; not excepting the moft occult crimes, hid from every mortal eye.

 From

* See this principle beautifully explained and illuftrated in a fermon upon the love of God, by Dr Butler, Bifhop of Durham, a writer of the firft rank.

From what caufe can dread proceed in that cafe, but from conviction of a fuperior being, avenger of wrongs? The dread, when immoderate, diforders the mind, and makes every unufual misfortune pafs for a punifhment inflicted by an invifible hand. "And they faid one to another, We "are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that "we faw the anguifh of his foul, when he be- "fought us, and we would not hear: there- "fore is this diftrefs come upon us. And Reu- "ben anfwered them, faying, Spake I not unto "you, faying, Do not fin againft the child; and "ye would not hear? therefore behold alfo his "blood is required*." Alphonfus, King of Naples, was a cruel and tyrannical prince. He drove his people to defpair with oppreffive taxes, treacheroufly affaffinated feveral of his barons, and loaded others with chains. During profperity, his confcience gave him little difquiet; but in adverfity, his crimes ftared him in the face, and made him believe that his diftreffes proceeded from the hand of God, as a juft punifhment. He was terrified to diftraction, when Charles VIII. of France approached with a numerous army: he deferted his kingdom; and fled to hide himfelf, from the face of God and of man.

But admitting a fenfe of Deity, is it evidence to us that a Deity actually exifts? It is complete evidence. So framed is man as to rely on the evidence

* Genefis xlii. 21, 22.

evidence of his ſenſes *; which evidence he may reject in words; but he cannot reject in thought, whatever bias he may have to ſcepticiſm. And experience confirms our belief; for our ſenſes, when in order, never deceive us.

The foregoing ſenſe of Deity is not the only evidence we have of his exiſtence: there is additional evidence from other branches of our nature. Inherent in the nature of man are two paſſions, devotion to an inviſible Being, and dread of puniſhment from him, when one is guilty of any crime. Theſe paſſions would be idle and abſurd, were there no Deity to be worſhipped or to be dreaded. Man makes a capital figure; and is the moſt perfect being that inhabits this earth: and yet were he endowed with paſſions or principles that have no end nor purpoſe, he would be the moſt irregular and abſurd of all Beings. Theſe paſſions both of them, direct us to a Deity, and afford us irreſiſtible evidence of his exiſtence.

Thus our Maker has revealed himſelf to us, in a way perfectly analogous to our nature: in the mind of every human creature, he has lighted up a lamp, which renders him viſible even to the weakeſt ſight. Nor ought it to eſcape obſervation, that here, as in every other caſe, the conduct of Providence to man, is uniform. It leaves him to be directed by reaſon, where liberty of choice

* See Eſſays on Morality and Natural Religion, Part II. ſect. 3.

is permitted; but in matters of duty, he is provided with guides less fallible than reason: in performing his duy to man, he is guided by the moral sense; in performing his duty to God, he is guided by the sense of Deity. In these mirrors, he perceives his duty intuitively.

It is no slight support to this doctrine, that if there really be a Deity, it is highly presumable, that he will reveal himself to man, fitted by nature to adore and worship him. To other animals, the knowledge of a Deity is of no importance: to man, it is of high importance. Were we totally ignorant of a Deity, this world would appear to us a mere chaos: under the government of a wise and benevolent Deity, chance is excluded; and every event appears to be the result of established laws: good men submit to whatever happens, without repining; knowing that every event is ordered by divine Providence: they submit with entire resignation; and such resignation is a sovereign balsam for every misfortune.

The sense of Deity resembles our other senses, which are quiescent till a proper object be presented. When all is silent about us, the sense of hearing lies dormant; and if from infancy a man were confined to a dark room, he would be as ignorant of his sense of seeing, as one born blind. Among savages, the objects that rouse the sense of Deity, are uncommon events above the power of man. A savage, if acquainted with no events but what

are familiar, has no perception of ſuperior powers; but a ſudden eclipſe of the ſun, thunder rattling in his ears, or the convulſion of an earthquake, rouſes his ſenſe of Deity, and directs him to ſome ſuperior being as the cauſe of theſe dreadful effects. The ſavage, it is true, errs in aſcribing to the immediate operation of a Deity, things that have a natural cauſe: his error however is evidence that he has a ſenſe of Deity, no leſs pregnant, than when he more juſtly attributes to the immediate operation of Deity, the formation of man, of this earth, of all the world.

The ſenſe of Deity, like the moral ſenſe, makes no capital figure among ſavages; the perceptions of both ſenſes being in them faint and obſcure. But in the progreſs of nations to maturity, theſe ſenſes become and more vigorous, ſo as among enlightened nations to acquire a commanding influence; leaving no doubt about right and wrong, and as little about the exiſtence of a Deity.

The obſcurity of the ſenſe of Deity among ſavages, has encouraged ſome ſceptical philoſophers to deny its exiſtence. It has been urged, That God does nothing by halves; and that if he had intended to make himſelf known to men, he would have afforded them conviction equal to that from ſeeing or hearing. When we argue thus about the purpoſes of the Almighty, we tread on ſlippery ground, where we ſeldom fail to ſtumble. What if it be the purpoſe of the Deity, to afford

us but an obſcure glimpſe of his being and attributes? We have reaſon from analogy to conjecture, that this may be the caſe. From ſome particulars mentioned above*, it appears at leaſt probable, that entire ſubmiſſion to the moral ſenſe, would be ill-ſuited to man in his preſent ſtate; and would prove more hurtful than beneficial. And to me it appears evident, that to be conſcious of the preſence of the Great God, as I am of a friend whom I hold by the hand, would be inconſiſtent with the part that Providence has deſtined me to act in this life. Reflect only on the reſtraint one is under, in preſence of a ſuperior, ſuppoſe the King himſelf: how much greater our reſtraint, with the ſame lively impreſſion of God's awful preſence! Humility and veneration would leave no room for other paſſions: man would be no longer man; and the ſyſtem of our preſent ſtate would be totally ſubverted. Add another reaſon: Such a conviction of future rewards and puniſhments as to overcome every inordinate deſire, would reduce us to the condition of a traveller in a paltry inn, having no wiſh but for day-light to proſecute his journey. For that very reaſon, it appears evidently the plan of Providence, that we ſhould have but an obſcure glimpſe of futurity. As the ſame plan of Providence is viſible in all, I conclude with aſſurance, that a certain degree of obſcurity, weighs nothing againſt

* Book ii. Sketch 1.

againſt the ſenſe of Deity, more than againſt the moral ſenſe, or againſt a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. Whether all men might not have been made angels, and whether more happineſs might not have reſulted from a different ſyſtem, lie far beyond the reach of human knowledge. From what is known of the conduct of Providence, we have reaſon to preſume, that our preſent ſtate is the reſult of wiſdom and benevolence. So much we know with certainty, that the ſenſe we have of Deity and of moral duty, correſpond accurately to the nature of man as an imperfect being; and that theſe ſenſes, were they abſolutely perfect, would convert him into a very different being.

A doctrine eſpouſed by ſeveral writers ancient and modern, pretends to compoſe the world without a Deity; that the world, compoſed of animals, vegetables, and brute matter, is ſelf-exiſtent and eternal; and that all events happen by a neceſſary chain of cauſes and effects. It will occur even at firſt view, that this theory is at leaſt improbable: can any ſuppoſition be more improbable than that the great work of planning and executing this univerſe, beautiful in all its parts, and bound together by the moſt perfect laws, ſhould be a blind work, performed without intelligence or contrivance? It would therefore be a ſufficient anſwer to obſerve, that this doctrine, though highly improbable, is however given to the public, like

a

a foundling, without cover or ſupport. But affirmatively I urge, that it is fundamentally overturned by the knowledge we derive of Deity from our own nature: if a Deity exiſt, ſelf-exiſtence muſt be his peculiar attribute; and we cannot heſitate in rejecting the ſuppoſition of a ſelf-exiſtent world, when it is ſo natural to ſuppoſe that the whole is the operation of a ſelf-exiſtent Being, whoſe power and wiſdom are adequate to that great work. I add, that this rational doctrine is eminently ſupported from contemplating the endleſs number of wiſe and benevolent effects, diſplayed every where on the face of this globe; which afford complete evidence of a wiſe and benevolent cauſe. As theſe effects are far above the power of man, we neceſſarily aſcribe them to a ſuperior Being, or in other words to the Deity*.

Some philoſophers there are, not indeed ſo hardened in ſcepticiſm as to deny the exiſtence of a Deity: They acknowledge a ſelf-exiſtent Being; and ſeem willing to beſtow on that Being power, wiſdom, and every other perfection. But then they maintain, that the world, or matter at leaſt, muſt alſo be ſelf-exiſtent. Their argument is, that *ex nihilo nihil fit*, that it is inconſiſtent for any thing to be made out of nothing, out of a *nonens*. To conſider nothing or a *nonens* as a material or ſubſtance out of which things can be formed, like a ſtatue out of ſtone or a ſword out of iron, is I acknowledge

* Firſt ſketch of this third book, ſect. 1.

knowledge a groſs abſurdity. But I perceive no abſurdity nor inconſiſtence in ſuppoſing that matter was brought into exiſtence by Almighty power; and the popular expreſſion, that God made the world out of nothing, has no other meaning. It is true, that in the operations of men nothing can be produced but from antecedent materials; and ſo accuſtomed are we to ſuch operations, as not readily to conceive how a thing can be brought into exiſtence without antecedent materials, or made out of nothing, as commonly expreſſed. But will any man in ſober ſenſe venture to ſet bounds to Almighty power, where he cannot point out a clear inconſiſtence? It is indeed difficult to conceive a thing ſo remote from common apprehenſion; but is there leſs difficulty in conceiving matter to exiſt without a cauſe, and to be entitled to the awful appellation of ſelf-exiſtent, like the Lord of the Univerſe, to whom a more exalted appellation cannot be given? Now, if it be within the utmoſt verge of poſſibility for matter to have been created, I conclude with the higheſt probability, that it owes its exiſtence to Almighty power. The neceſſity of one ſelf-exiſtent being is intuitively certain; but I perceive no neceſſity, nor indeed probability, that there ſhould be more than one. Difficulties about the creation of matter, teſtify our ignorance; but to argue from our ignorance that a thing cannot be, has always been held very weak reaſoning. Our faculties are adapted to our preſent

ſent ſtate, and perform their office in perfection. But to complain that they do not reach the origin of things, is no leſs abſurd than to complain that we cannot aſcend to the moon in order to be acquainted with its inhabitants. At the ſame time, it is a comfortable reflection, that the queſtion, whether matter was created or no, is a pure ſpeculation, and that either ſide may be adopted without impiety. To me it appears more ſimple and more natural to hold it to be a work of creation, than to be ſelf-exiſtent, and conſequently independent of the Almighty either to create or to annihilate. I cheerfully make the former an article of my Creed; but without anathematiſing thoſe who adopt the latter. I would however have it underſtood, that I limit my conceſſion to matter in its original rude ſtate. I cannot poſſibly carry my complaiſance ſo far as to comprehend the world in its preſent perfection. That immenſe machine compoſed of parts without number ſo artfully combined as to fulfil the intention of the maker, muſt be the production of a great being, omniſcient as well as omnipotent. To aſſign blind fatality as the cauſe, is an inſufferable abſurdity.

Many groſs and abſurd conceptions of Deity that have prevailed among rude nations, are urged by ſome writers as an objection againſt a ſenſe of Deity. That objection ſhall not be overlooked; but it will be anſwered to better purpoſe, after theſe

these grofs and abfurd conceptions are examined in the chapter immediately following.

The proof of a Deity from the innate fenfe here explained, differs materially from what is contained in effays on morality and natural religion *. The proof there given is founded on a chain of reafoning, altogether independent on the innate fenfe of Deity. Both equally produce conviction; but as fenfe operates intuitively without reafoning, the fenfe of Deity is made a branch of human nature, in order to enlighten thofe who are incapable of a long chain of reafoning; and to fuch, who make the bulk of mankind, it is more convincing, than the moft perfpicuous reafoning to a philofopher.

CHAP. II.

Progrefs of Opinions with refpect to Deity.

THE fenfe of Deity, like many other delicate fenfes, is in favages fo faint and obfcure as eafily to be biaffed from truth. Among them, the belief of many fuperior beings, is univerfal. And two caufes join to produce that belief. The firft is,

* Part ii. fect. 7.

is, that being accustomed to a plurality of visible objects, men, mountains, trees, cattle, and such like, they are naturally led to imagine a like plurality in things not visible; and from that slight bias, slight indeed but natural, is partly derived the system of Polytheism, universal among savages. The other is, that savages know little of the connection between causes and effects, and still less of the order and government of the world: every event that is not familiar, appears to them singular and extraordinary; and if such event exceed human power, it is without hesitation ascribed to a superior being. But as it occurs not to a savage, nor to any person who is not a philosopher, that the many various events exceeding human power and seemingly unconnected, may all proceed from the same cause; they are readily ascribed to different beings. Pliny ascribes Polytheism to the consciousness men have of their imbecillity: "Our "powers are confined within narrow bounds: we "do not readily conceive powers in the Deity "much more extensive: and we supply by num-"ber what is wanting in power *." Polytheism, thus founded, is the first stage in the progress of theology; for it is embraced by the rudest savages, who have neither capacity nor inclination to pierce deeper into the nature of things.

This

* Plurality of heads or of hands in one idol, is sometimes made to supply plurality of different idols. Hence among savages the grotesque figure of some of their idols.

This stage is distinguishable from others, by a belief that all superior beings are malevolent. Man, by nature weak and helpless, is prone to fear, dreading every new object and every unusual event. Savages, having no protection against storms, tempests, nor other external accidents, and having no pleasures but in gratifying hunger, thirst, and animal love; have much to fear, and little to hope. In that disconsolate condition, they attribute the bulk of their distresses to invisible beings, who in their opinion must be malevolent. This seems to have been the opinion of the Greeks in the days of Solon; as appears in a conversation between him and Crœsus King of Lydia, mentioned by Herodotus in the first book of his history. "Crœsus, said Solon, you ask me about human "affairs; and I answer as one who thinks, that "all the gods are envious and disturbers of man-"kind." The negroes on the coast of Guinea, dread their deities as tyrants and oppressors: having no conception of a good deity, they attribute the few blessings they receive, to the soil, to the rivers, to the trees, and to the plants. The Lithuanians continued Pagans down to the fourteenth century; and worshipped in gloomy woods, where their deities were held to reside. Their worship probably was prompted by fear, which is allied to gloominess. The people of Kamskatka acknowledge to this day many malevolent deities, having little or no notion of a good deity. They believe the

the air, the water, the mountains, and the woods, to be inhabited by malevolent ſpirits, whom they fear and worſhip. The ſavages of Guiana aſcribe to the devil even their moſt common diſeaſes; nor do they ever think of another remedy, but to apply to a ſorcerer to drive him away. Such negroes as believe in the devil, paint his images white. Beſide the Eſquimaux, there are many tribes in the extenſive country of Labrador, who believe the Deity to be malevolent, and worſhip him out of fear. When they eat, they throw a piece of fleſh into the fire as an offering to him; and when they go to ſea in a canoe, they throw ſomething on the ſhore to render him propitious. Sometimes, in a capricious fit, they go out with guns and hatchets to kill him; and on their return boaſt that they have done ſo.

Conviction of ſuperior beings, who, like men, are of a mixed nature, ſometimes doing good, ſometimes miſchief, conſtitutes the ſecond ſtage. This came to be the ſyſtem of theology in Greece. The introduction of writing among the Greeks, while they were little better than ſavages, produced a compound of character and manners, that has not a parallel in any other nation. They were acute in ſcience, ſkilful in fine arts, extremely deficient in morals, groſs beyond conception in theology, and ſuperſtitious to a degree of folly; a ſtrange jumble of exquiſite ſenſe and abſurd nonſenſe. They held their gods to reſemble men in their ex-

ternal

ternal figure; and to be corporeal. In the 21ſt book of the Iliad, Minerva with a huge ſtone beats Mars to the ground, whoſe monſtrous body covered ſeven broad acres. As corporeal beings, they were ſuppoſed to require the nouriſhment of meat, drink, and ſleep. Homer mentions more than once the inviting of gods to a feaſt: and Pauſanias reports, that in the temple of Bacchus at Athens, there were figures of clay, repreſenting a feaſt given by Amphyction to Bacchus and other deities. The inhabitants of the iſland Java are not ſo groſs in their conceptions, as to think that the gods eat the offerings preſented to them: but it is their opinion, that a deity brings his mouth near the offering, ſucks out all its ſavour, and leaves it taſteleſs like water *. The Grecian gods, as deſcribed by Homer, dreſs, bathe, and anoint, like mortals. Venus, after being detected by her huſband in the embraces of Mars, retires to Paphos;

> Where to the pow'r an hundred altars riſe;
> And breathing odours ſcent the balmy ſkies;
> Conceal'd ſhe bathes in conſecrated bow'rs,
> The Graces unguents ſhed, ambroſial ſhow'rs,
> Unguents that charm the gods! She laſt aſſumes
> Her wond'rous robes; and full the goddeſs blooms.
>
> ODYSSEY, *Book* VIII.

* All Greek writers, and thoſe in their neighbourhood, form the world out of a chaos. They had no ſuch exalted notion of a deity as to believe, that he could make the world out of nothing.

Juno's drefs is moft poetically defcribed, Iliad, Book XIV. It was alfo univerfally believed, that the gods were fond of women, and had many children by them. The ancient Germans thought more fenfibly, that the gods were too high to refemble men in any degree, or to be confined within the walls of a temple. The Greeks feem to have thought, that the gods did not much exceed themfelves in knowledge. When Agefilaus journeyed with his private retinue, he ufually lodged in a temple; making the gods witneffes, fays Plutarch, of his moft fecret actions. The Greeks thought, that a god, like a man, might know what paffed within his own houfe; without knowing any thing paffing at a diftance. "If it be true," fays Ariftotle, (Rhetoric, Book II.) "that even the "gods do not know every thing, there is little "reafon to expect great knowledge among men." Agamemnon in Efchylus, putting off his travelling habit, and dreffing himfelf in fplendid purple, is afraid of being feen and envied by fome jealous god. We learn from Seneca, that people ftrove for the feat next to the image of the deity, that their prayers might be the better heard. But what we have chiefly to remark upon this head, is, that the Grecian gods were, like men, held capable of doing both good and ill. Jupiter, their higheft deity, was a ravifher of women, and a notorious adulterer. In the fecond book of the Iliad, he fends a lying dream to deceive Agamemnon.

Mars

Mars seduces Venus by bribes to commit adultery*. In the Rhesus of Euripides, Minerva, disguised like Venus, deceives Paris by a gross lie. The ground-work of the tragedy of Xuthus is a lying oracle, declaring Ion, son of Apollo and Creusa, to be the son of Xuthus. Orestes in Euripides, having slain his mother Clytemnestra, excuses himself as having been misled by Apollo to commit the crime. "Ah!" says he, "had I consulted the ghost of my father, he would have dissuaded me from a crime that has proved my ruin, without doing him any good." He concludes with observing, that having acted by Apollo's command, Apollo is the only criminal. In a tragedy of Sophocles, Minerva makes no difficulty to cheat Ajax, promising to be his friend, while underhand she is serving Ulysses, his bitter enemy. Mercury, in revenge for the murder of his son Myrtilus, entails curses on Pelops the murderer, and on all his race †. In general, the gods, every where in Greek tragedies, are partial, unjust, tyrannical and revengeful. The Greeks accordingly have no reserve in abusing their gods. In the tragedy of Prometheus, Jupiter, without the least ceremony, is accused of being an usurper.

 Eschylus

* Odyssey, Book VIII.

† The English translator of that tragedy, observes it to be remarkable in the Grecian creed, that the gods punish not only the persons guilty, but their innocent posterity.

Eſchylus proclaims publicly on the ſtage, that Jupiter, a jealous, cruel, and implacable tyrant, had overturned every thing in heaven: and that the other gods were reduced to be his ſlaves. In the Iliad, Book XIII., Menelaus addreſſes Jupiter in the following words: "O Father Jove! in wiſdom, "they ſay, thou excelleſt both men and gods. Yet "all theſe ills proceed from thee; for the wicked "thou doſt aid in war. Thou art a friend to the "Trojans, whoſe ſouls delight in force, who are "never glutted with blood." The gods were often treated with a ſort of contemptuous familiarity, and employed in very low offices. Nothing is more common, than to introduce them as actors in Greek tragedies; frequently for trivial purpoſes: Apollo comes upon the ſtage moſt courteouſly to acquaint the audience with the ſubject of the play. Why is this not urged by our critics, as claſſical authority againſt the rule of Horace, *Nec deus interſit niſi dignus vindice nodus* *. Homer makes very uſeful ſervants of his gods. Minerva in particular, is a faithful attendant upon Ulyſſes. She acts the herald, and calls the chiefs to council †. She marks the place where a great ſtone fell that was thrown by Ulyſſes ‡. She aſſiſts Ulyſſes

* Nor let a god in perſon ſtand diſplay'd.
Unleſs the labouring plot deſerve his aid.
FRANCIS.

† Odyſſey, Book VIII. ‡ Book VIII.

Ulyſſes to hide his treaſure in a cave *, and helps him to wreſtle with the beggar †. Ulyſſes being toſt with cares in bed, ſhe deſcends from heaven to make him fall aſleep ‡. This laſt might poſſibly be ſqueezed into an allegory, if Minerva were not frequently introduced where there is no place for an allegory. Jupiter, Book XVII. of the Iliad, is introduced comforting the ſteeds of Achilles for the death of Patroclus. Creuſa keeps it a profound ſecret from her huſband, that ſhe had a child by Apollo. It was held as little honourable in Greece to commit fornication with a god as with a man. It appears from Cicero §, that when Greek philoſophers began to reaſon about the deity, their notions were wonderfully crude. One of the hardeſt morſels to digeſt in Plato's philoſophy, was a doctrine, That God is incorporeal; which by many was thought abſurd, for that, without a body, he could not have ſenſes, nor prudence, nor pleaſure. The religious creed of the Romans ſeems to have been little leſs impure than that of the Greeks. It was a ceremony of theirs, in beſieging a town, to evocate the tutelar deity, and to tempt him by a reward to betray his friends and votaries. In that ceremony, the name of the tutelar deity was thought of importance; and for that reaſon, the tutelar deity of Rome was a profound ſe-

* Odyſſey, Book XIII.

† Book XVIII.

‡ Book XX.

§ Lib. i. De natura deorum.

cret*. Appian of Alexandria, in his book of the Parthian war, reports, that Anthony, reduced to extremity

* The form of the *evocatio* follows. "Tuo ductu, inquit, "Pythie Apollo, tuoque numine instinctus, pergo ad delen-"dam urbem Veios: tibique hinc decimam partem prædæ "voveo. Te simul, Juno Regina, quæ nunc Veios colis, pre-"cor, ut nos victores in nostram tuamque mox futuram ur-"bem sequare: ubi te, dignum amplitudine tua, templum "accipiat." *Titus Livius, lib.* 5. *cap.* 21.——[*In English thus:* "Under thy guidance and divine inspiration, O Pythian A-"pollo, I march to the destruction of *Veii;* and to thy shrine "I devote a tenth of the plunder. Imperial Juno, guardian "of Veii, deign to prosper our victorious arms, and a temple "shall be erected to thy honour, suitable to the greatness and "majesty of thy name."]——But it appears from Macrobius, that they used a form of evocation even when the name of the tutelar deity was unknown to them. "Si deus, si dea "est, cui populus civitasque Carthaginiensis est in tutela, te-"que maxime ille qui urbis hujus populique tutelam reci-"pisti, precor, veneror que, veniamque a vobis peto, ut vos "populum civitatemque Carthaginiensem deseratis, loca, tem-"pla, sacra, urbemque eorum relinquiatis, absque his abeatis, "eique populo, civitatique metum, formidinem, oblivionem, "injiciatis, proditique Romam ad me meosque veniatis, nos-"traque vobis loca, templa, sacra, urbs, acceptior probatior-"que sit, mihique populoque Romano militibusque meis præ-"positi sitis, ut sciamus intelligamusque. Si ita feceritis, vo-"veo vobis templa ludosque facturum." *Saturnal. lib.* 3. *cap.* 9.——[*In English thus.* "That divinity, whether god or "goddess, who is the guardian of the state of Carthage, "that divinity I invoke, I pray and supplicate, that he will "desert that perfidious people. Honour not with thy pre-"sence

extremity by the Parthians, lifted up his eyes to heaven, and befought the gods, that if any of them were jealous of his former happinefs, they would pour their vengeance upon his head alone, and fuffer his army to efcape. The ftory of Paris and the three goddeffes gives no favourable impreffion, either of the morals or religion of the Romans. Juno, and her two fifter-deities fubmit their difpute about beauty to the fhepherd Paris, who confcientioufly pronounces in favour of Venus. But

——— manet alta mente repoftum
Judicium Paridis, fpretæque injuria formæ.

Juno, not fatisfied with wreaking her malice againft the honeft fhepherd, declares war againft his whole nation. Not even Eneas, though a fugitive in foreign lands, efcapes her fury. Their great god Jupiter is introduced on the ftage by Plautus, to deceive Alcmena, and to lie with her in the fhape of her hufband. Nay, it was the opinion of the Romans, that this play made much for the honour

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" fence their temples, their ceremonies, nor their city; aban-
" don them to all their fears, leave them to infamy and ob-
" livion. Fly hence to Rome, where, in my country, and
" among my fellow-citizens, thou fhalt have nobler temples,
" and more acceptable facrifices; thou fhalt be the tutelar
" deity of this army, and of the Roman ftate. On this con-
" dition, I here vow to erect temples and inftitute games to
" thine honour."]

of Jupiter; for in times of national troubles and calamities, it was commonly acted to appease his anger;—a pregnant instance of the gross conceptions of that warlike people in morality, as well as in religion.

A division of invisible beings into benevolent and malevolent, without any mixture of these qualities, makes the third stage. The talents and feelings of men, refine gradually under good government: social amusements begin to make a figure: benevolence is highly regarded; and some men are found without gall. Having thus acquired a notion of pure benevolence, and finding it exemplified in some eminent persons, it was an easy step in the progress of theological opinions, to bestow the same character upon some superior beings. This led men to distinguish their gods into two kinds, essentially different, one entirely benevolent, another entirely malevolent; and the difference between good and ill, which are diametrically opposite, favoured that distinction. Fortunate events out of the common course of nature, were accordingly ascribed to benevolent deities; and unfortunate events of that kind to malevolent. In the time of Pliny the elder, malevolent deities were worshipped at Rome. He mentions a temple dedicated to *Bad Fortune*, another to the disease termed a *Fever*. The Lacedemonians worshipped *Death* and *Fear*; and the people of Cadiz *Poverty* and *Old Age*; in order to deprecate

deprecate their wrath. Such gods were by the Romans termed *Averrunci*, as putting away evil.

Conviction of one ſupreme benevolent Deity, and of inferior deities, ſome benevolent, ſome malevolent, is the fourth ſtage. Such conviction, which gains ground in proportion as morality ripens, ariſes from a remarkable difference between gratitude and fear. Willing to ſhow my gratitude for ſome kindneſs proceeding from an unknown hand, ſeveral perſons occur to my conjectures; but I always fix at laſt upon one perſon as the moſt likely. Fear is of an oppoſite nature: it expands itſelf upon every ſuſpicious perſon, and blackens them all. Thus, upon providential good fortune above the power of man, we naturally reſt upon one benevolent Deity as the cauſe; and to him we confine our gratitude and veneration. When, on the other hand, we are ſtruck with an uncommon calamity, every thing that poſſibly may be the cauſe raiſes terror. Hence the propenſity in ſavages to multiply objects of fear; but to confine their gratitude and veneration to a ſingle object. Gratitude and veneration, at the ſame time, are of ſuch a nature, as to raiſe a high opinion of the perſon who is their object; and when a ſingle inviſible being is underſtood to pour out bleſſings with a liberal hand, good men, inflamed with gratitude, put no bounds to the power and benevolence of that being. And thus one ſupreme benevolent Deity comes

comes to be recognized among the more enlightened ſavages. With reſpect to malevolent deities, as they are ſuppoſed to be numerous, and as there is no natural impulſe for elevating one above another; they are all of them held to be of an inferior rank, ſubordinate to the ſupreme Deity.

Unity in the ſupreme Being hath, among philoſophers, a more ſolid foundation, namely, unity of deſign and of order in the creation and government of this world *. At the ſame time, the paſſion of gratitude, which leads even ſavages to the attribute of unity in the ſupreme Being, prepares the mind for reliſhing the proof of that unity, founded on the unity of his works.

The belief of one ſupreme benevolent Deity, and of ſubordinate deities benevolent and malevolent, is and has been more univerſal than any other religious creed. I confine myſelf to a few inſtances; for a complete enumeration would be endleſs. The different ſavage tribes in Dutch Guiana, agree pretty much in their articles of faith.

* All things in the univerſe are evidently of a piece. Every thing is adjuſted to every thing; one deſign prevails through the whole: and this uniformity leads the mind to acknowledge one author; becauſe the conception of different authors without diſtinction of attributes or operations, ſerves only to perplex the imagination, without beſtowing any ſatisfaction on the underſtanding. *Natural Hiſtory of Religion, by David Hume, Eſquire.*

faith. They hold the exiſtence of one ſupreme Deity, whoſe chief attribute is benevolence; and to him they aſcribe every good that happens. But as it is againſt his nature to do ill, they believe in ſubordinate malevolent beings, like our devil, who occaſion thunder, hurricanes, earthquakes, and who are the authors of death, diſeaſes, and of every misfortune. To theſe devils, termed in their language *Yowahoos*, they direct every ſupplication, in order to avert their malevolence; while the ſupreme Deity is entirely neglected: ſo much more powerful among ſavages, is fear than gratitude. The North American ſavages have all of them a notion of a ſupreme Deity, creator and governor of the world; and of inferior deities, ſome good, ſome ill. Theſe are ſuppoſed to have bodies, and to live much as men do, but without being ſubjected to any diſtreſs. The ſame creed prevails among the negroes of Benin and Congo, among the people of New Zeland, among the inhabitants of Java, of Madagaſcar, of the Molucca iſlands, and of the Caribbee iſlands. The Chinguleſe, a tribe in the iſland of Ceylon, acknowlege one God creator of the univerſe, with ſubordinate deities who act as his deputies: agriculture is the peculiar province of one, navigation of another. The creed of the Tonquineſe is nearly the ſame. The inhabitants of Otaheité, termed *King George's Iſland*, believe in one ſupreme Deity; and in inferior deities without

without end, who preſide over particular parts of the creation. They pay no adoration to the ſupreme Deity, thinking him too far elevated above his creatures to concern himſelf with what they do. They believe the ſtars to be children of the ſun and moon, and an eclipſe to be the time of copulation. The Naudoweſſies are the fartheſt remote from our colonies of any of the North Americans whom we are in any degree acquainted with. They acknowledge one ſupreme Being or giver of life, to whom they look up as the ſource of good, and from whom no evil can proceed. They acknowledge alſo a bad ſpirit of great power, by whom all the evils that befal mankind are inflicted. To him they pray in their diſtreſſes; begging that he will either avert their troubles or mitigate them. They acknowledge beſide good ſpirits of an inferior degree, who in their particular departments contribute to the happineſs of mortals. But they ſeem to have no notion of a ſpirit diveſted of matter. They believe their gods to be of the human form, but of a nature more excellent than man. They believe in a future ſtate; and that their employments will be ſimilar to what they are engaged in here, but without labour or fatigue; in ſhort, that they ſhall live for ever in regions of plenty, and enjoy in a higher degree every gratification they delight in here. According to Arnobius, certain Roman deities preſided over the various operations of

men.

men. Venus prefided over carnal copulation; Puta affifted at pruning trees; and Peta in requefting benefits: Nemeftrinus was god of the woods, Nodutus ripened corn, and Terenfis helped to thrafh it; Vibilia affifted travellers: orphans were under the care of Orbona, and dying perfons, of Nænia; Offilago hardened the bones of infants; and Mellonia protected bees, and beftowed fweetnefs on their honey. The inhabitants of the Ifland of Formofa recognize two fupreme deities in company; the one a male, god of the men, the other a female, goddefs of the women. The bulk of their inferior deities are the fouls of upright men, who are conftantly doing good, and the fouls of wicked men, who are conftantly doing ill. The inland negroes acknowledge one fupreme Being, creator of all things; attributing to him infinite power, infinite knowledge, and ubiquity. They believe that the dead are converted into fpirits, termed by them *Iananini*, or protectors, being appointed to guard their parents and relations. The ancient Goths and feveral other northern nations, acknowledged one fupreme Being; and at the fame time worfhipped three fubordinate deities; Thor, reputed the fame with Jupiter; Oden, or Woden, the fame with Mars; and Friga, the fame with Venus *. Socrates

* "Regnator omnium Deus, cætera fubjecta atque parentia;" *Tacitus de moribus Germanorum, cap.* 39. [*In Englifh thus*: "One "God the ruler of all; the reft inferior and fubordinate."]

crates taking the cup of poifon from the execu-
tioner, held it up toward heaven, and pouring out
fome of it as an oblation to the fupreme Deity,
pronounced the following prayer: "I implore
"the immortal God that my tranflation hence
"may be happy." Then turning to Crito, faid,
"O Crito! I owe a cock to Efculapius, pay it."
From this incident we find that Socrates, foaring
above his countrymen, had attained to the belief
of a fupreme benevolent Deity. But in that dark
age of religion, fuch purity is not to be expected
from Socrates himfelf, as to have rejected fub-
ordinate deities, even of the mercenary kind.

Different offices being affigned to the gods, as
above mentioned, proper names followed of courfe.
And when a god was afcertained by a name, the
bufy mind would naturally proceed to trace his
genealogy.

As unity in the Deity was not an eftablifhed
doctrine in the countries where the Chriftian re-
ligion was firft promulgated, Chriftianity could
not fail to prevail over Paganifm; for improve-
ments in the mental faculties lead by fure fteps,
though flow, to one God.

The fifth ftage is, the belief of one fupreme be-
nevolent Deity, as in that immediately foregoing,
with many inferior benevolent deities, and one
only who is malevolent. As men improve in na-
tural knowledge and become fkilful in tracing
caufes from effects, they find much lefs malice and
ill-

ill-defign than was imagined: humanity at laft prevails, which with improved knowledge banifh the fufpicion of ill-defign, in every cafe where an event can be explained without it. In a word, a fettled opinion of good prevailing in the world, produced conviction among fome nations, lefs ignorant than their neighbours and lefs brutal, that there is but one malevolent fubordinate deity, and good fubordinate deities without number. The ancient Perfians acknowledged two principles; one all good and all powerful, named *Hormuz*, and by the Greeks corruptly *Oromazes*; the other evil, named *Ahariman*, and by the Greeks *Arimanes*. Some authors affert, that the Perfians held thefe two principles to be co-eternal; others that Oromazes firft fubfifted alone, that he created both light and darknefs, and that he created Arimanes out of darknefs. That the latter was the opinion of the ancient Perfians, appears from their Bible, termed the *Sadder*; which teaches, That there is one God fupreme over all, many good angels, and but one evil fpirit.' Plutarch acquaints us, that Hormus and Ahariman, ever at variance, formed each of them creatures of their own ftamp; that the former created good genii, fuch as goodnefs, truth, wifdom, juftice; and that the latter created evil genii, fuch as infidelity, falfehood, oppreffion, theft. This fyftem of theology, commonly termed the *Manichean Syftem*, is faid to be alfo the religious creed of Pegu, with the following

ing addition, that the evil principle only is to be worſhipped; which is abundantly probable, as fear is a predominant paſſion in barbarians. The people of Florida believe a ſupreme benevolent Deity, and a ſubordinate deity that is malevolent: neglecting the former, who, they ſay, does no harm, they bend their whole attention to ſoften the latter, who, they ſay, torments them day and night. The inhabitants of Darien acknowledge but one evil ſpirit, of whom they are deſperately afraid. The Hottentots, mentioned by ſome writers as altogether deſtitute of religion, are on the contrary farther advanced toward its purity, than ſome of their neighbours. Their creed is, That there is a ſupreme Being, who is goodneſs itſelf; of whom they have no occaſion to ſtand in awe, as he is incapable by his nature to hurt them; that there is alſo a malevolent ſpirit, ſubordinate to the former, who muſt be ſerved and worſhipped in order to avert his malice. The Epicurean doctrine with reſpect to the gods in general, That being happy in themſelves they extend not their providential care to men, differs not widely from what the Hottentot believes with reſpect to the ſupreme Being.

Having traced the ſenſe of deity, from its dawn in the groſſeſt ſavages to its approaching maturity among enlightened nations, we proceed to the laſt ſtage of the progreſs, which makes the true ſyſtem of theology; and that is, conviction of a ſupreme

preme Being, boundlefs in every perfection, without fubordinate deities, benevolent or malevolent. Savages learn early to trace the chain of caufes and effects, with refpect to ordinary events: they know that fafting produces hunger, that labour occafions wearinefs, that fire burns, that the fun and rain contribute to vegetation. But when they go beyond fuch familiar events, they lofe fight of caufe and effect: the changes of weather, of winds, of heat and cold, imprefs them with a notion of chance: earthquakes, hurricanes, ftorms of thunder and lightning, which fill them with terror, are afcribed to malignant beings of greater power than man. In the progrefs of knowledge light begins to break in upon them: they difcover, that fuch phenomena, however tremendous, come under the general law of caufe and effect; and that there is no ground for afcribing them to malignant fpirits. At the fame time, our more refined fenfes ripen by degrees: focial affections come to prevail, and morality makes a deep impreffion. In maturity of fenfe and underftanding, benevolence appears more and more; and beautiful final caufes are difcovered in many of nature's productions, that formerly were thought ufelefs, or perhaps hurtful: and the time may come, we have folid ground to hope that it will come, when doubts and difficulties about the government of Providence, will all of them be cleared up; and every event be found conducive

to the general good. Such views of Providence banifh malevolent deities ; and we fettle at laft in a moft comfortable opinion ; either that there are no fuch beings ; or that, if they exift and are permitted to perpetrate any mifchief, it is in order to produce greater good *. Thus, through a long maze of errors, man arrives at true religon, acknowledging but one Being, fupreme in power, intelligence, and benevolence, who created all other beings, to whom all other beings are fubjected, and who directs every event to anfwer the beft purpofes. This fyftem is true theology †.

Having gone through the different ftages of religious belief, in its gradual progrefs toward truth and purity, I proceed to a very important article, The hiftory of tutelar deities. The belief of tutelar deities preceded indeed feveral of the ftages mentioned, witnefs the tutelar deities of Greece and Rome ; but as it is not connected with any one of them exclufive of the reft, the clearnefs of method required it to be poftponed to all of them. This belief, founded on felfifhnefs, made a

* The Abyffinians think that the afcribing to the devil the wicked acts of which the Portugueze declare him to be guilty, is falling into the error of the Manichees, who admit two principles, one good, one evil.

† Pliny feems to relifh the doctrine of unity in the Deity: but is at a lofs about forming any juft conception of him, fometimes confidering the world to be our only deity, fometimes the fun.

a rapid progreſs after property in the goods of fortune was eſtabliſhed. The Greeks, the Romans, and indeed moſt nations that were not mere ſavages, appropriated to themſelves tutelar deities, who were underſtood to befriend them upon all occaſions; and, in particular, to fight for them againſt their enemies. The Iliad of Homer is full of miraculous battles between the Greeks and Trojans, the tutelar deities mixing with the contending parties, and partaking of every diſaſter, death only excepted, which immortals could not ſuffer. The *lares*, *penates*, or houſehold-gods, of Indoſtan, of Greece, and of Rome, bear witneſs, that every family, perhaps every perſon, was thought to be under the protection of a tutelar deity. Alexander ab Alexandro gives a liſt of tutelar deities. Apollo and Minerva were the tutelar deities of Athens; Bacchus and Hercules of the Bœotian Thebes; Juno of Carthage, Samos, Sparta, Argos, and Mycené; Venus of Cyprus; Apollo of Rhodes and of Delphos; Vulcan of Lemnos; Bacchus of Naxus; Neptune of Tenedos, &c. The poets teſtify, that even individuals had tutelar deities:

> Mulciber in Trojam, pro Troja ſtabat Apollo:
> Æqua Venus Teucris, Pallas iniqua fuit.
> Oderat Æneam, propior Saturnia Turno;
> Ille tamen Veneris numine tutus erat.

Sæpe ferox cautum petiit Neptunus Ulyssem;
Eripuit patruo sæpe Minerva suo *.

Though the North-American savages recognize a supreme Being, wise and benevolent, and also subordinate benevolent beings who are entrusted with the government of the world; yet as the great distance of these subordinate beings, and the full occupation they have in general government, are supposed to make them overlook individuals, every man has a tutelar deity of his own, termed *Manitou*, who is constantly invoked during war to give him victory over his enemies. The Natches, bordering on the Mississippi, offer up the skulls of their enemies to their god, and deposite them in his temple. They consider that Being as their tutelar deity, who assists them against their enemies, and to whom therefore the skull of an enemy must be an acceptable offering. Though they worship the sun, who impartially shines on all mankind; yet such is their partiality, that they consider themselves as his chosen people, and that their enemies are his enemies.

A

* "The rage of Vulcan, and the martial maid,
"Pursu'd old Troy; but Phœbus' love repay'd.
"Æneas safe, defy'd great Juno's hate,
"For Venus guards her favour'd offspring's fate:
"In vain Ulysses Neptune's wrath assails,
"O'er winds and waves Minerva's power prevails †."

† Ovid. Trist. lib. 1. eleg. 2.

A belief ſo abſurd ſhews woful imbecillity in human nature. Is it not obvious, that the great God of heaven and earth governs the world by inflexible laws, from which he never can ſwerve in any caſe, becauſe they are the beſt poſſible in every caſe? To ſuppoſe any family or nation to be an object of his peculiar love, is no leſs impious, than to ſuppoſe any family or nation to be an object of his peculiar hatred: they equally arraign Providence of partiality. Even the Goths had more juſt notions of the Deity. Totila, recommending to his people juſtice and humanity, ſays, "Quare ſic habete, ea quæ amari ab ho-"minibus ſolent ita vobis ſalva fore, ſi juſtitiæ "reverentiam ſervaveritis. Si tranſitis in mores "alios, etiam Deum ad hoſtes tranſiturum. Ne-"que enim ille, aut omnibus omnino hominibus, "aut uni alicui genti, addicit ſe ſocium *."

That God was once the tutelar deity of the Jews, is true; but not in the vulgar acceptation of that term, importing a deity choſen by a people to be their patron and protector. The orthodox faith

* "Be aſſured of this, that while ye preſerve your reve-"rence for juſtice, ye will enjoy all the bleſſings which are "eſtimable among mankind. If ye refuſe to obey her dic-"tates, and your morals become corrupted, God himſelf will "abandon you, and take the part of your enemies. For al-"though the benevolence of that power is not partially con-"fined to tribe or people, yet in the eye of his juſtice all men "are not equally the objects of his approbation."

faith is, "That God chofe the Jews as his peculiar people, not from any partiality to them, "but that there might be one nation to keep alive "the knowledge of one fupreme Deity; which "fhould be profperous while they adhered to him, "and unprofperous when they declined to idolatry; not only in order to make them perfevere "in the true faith, but alfo in order to exemplify "to all nations the conduct of his Providence." It is certain, however, that the perverfe Jews claimed God Almighty as their tutelar deity in the vulgar acceptation of the term. And this error throws light upon an incident related in the Acts of the Apoftles. There was a prophecy firmly believed by the Jews, that the Meffiah would come among them in perfon to reftore their kingdom. The Chriftians gave a different fenfe to the prophecy, namely, that the kingdom promifed was not of this world. And they faid, that Chrift was fent to pave the way to their heavenly kingdom, by obtaining forgivenefs of their fins. At the fame time, as the Jews held all other nations in abhorrence, it was natural for them to conclude, that the Meffiah would be fent to them only, God's chofen people: for which reafon, even the apoftles were at firft doubtful about preaching the gofpel to any but to the Jews *. But the apoftles reflecting, that it was one great purpofe of the miffion, to banifh from the Jews their grovelling and

* See the xth and xith chapters of the Acts of the Apoftles.

and impure notion of a tutelar deity, and to proclaim a ſtate of future happineſs to all who believe in Chriſt, they proceeded to preach the goſpel to all men: "Then Peter opened his mouth, "and ſaid, Of a truth I perceive, that God is no "reſpecter of perſons; but in every nation, he "that feareth him, and worketh righteouſneſs, is "accepted with him *." The foregoing reaſoning, however, did not ſatisfy the Jews: they could not digeſt the opinion, that God ſent his Meſſiah to ſave all nations, and that he was the God of the Gentiles as well as of the Jews. They ſtormed againſt Paul in particular, for inculcating that doctrine †.

Conſidering that religion in its purity was eſtabliſhed by the goſpel, is it not amazing, that even Chriſtians fell back to the worſhip of tutelar deities? They did not indeed adopt the abſurd opinion, that the ſupreme Being was their tutelar deity: but they held, that there are divine perſons ſubordinate to the Almighty, who take under their care nations, families, and even individuals; an opinion that differs not eſſentially from that of tutelar deities among the Heathens. That opinion, which flatters ſelf-love, took root in the fifth century, when the deification of ſaints was introduced, ſimilar to the deification of heroes among the

* Acts of the Apoſtles, chap. x. 34.

† Acts of the Apoſtles, chap. xiii.

the ancients. People are fond of friends to be their interceſſors; and with regard to the Deity, deified ſaints were thought the propereſt interceſſors. Temples were built and dedicated to them; and ſolemn rites of worſhip inſtituted to render them propitious. It was imagined, that the ſouls of deified ſaints are at liberty to roam where they liſt, and that they love the places where their bodies are interred; which accordingly made the ſepulchres of the ſaints a common rendezvous of ſupplicants. What paved the way to notions ſo abſurd, was the groſs ignorance that clouded the Chriſtian world, after the northern barbarians became maſters of Europe. In the ſeventh century, the biſhops were ſo illiterate, as to be indebted to others for the ſhallow ſermons they preached; and the very few of that order who had any learning, ſatisfied themſelves with compoſing inſipid homilies, collected from the writings of Auguſtin and Gregory. In the ninth century, matters grew worſe and worſe; for theſe ſaints, held at firſt to be mediators for Chriſtians in general, were now converted into tutelar deities in the ſtricteſt ſenſe. An opinion prevailed, that ſuch ſaints as are occupied about the ſouls of Chriſtians in general, have little time for individuals; which led every church and every private Chriſtian, to elect for themſelves a particular ſaint, to be their patron or tutelar deity. That practice made it neceſſary to deify ſaints without end, in order to furniſh a tutelar

tutelar deity to every individual. The dubbing of ſaints, became a new ſource of abuſes and frauds in the Chriſtian world: lying wonders were invented, and fabulous hiſtories compoſed, to celebrate exploits that never were performed, and to glorify perſons who never had a being. And thus religion among Chriſtians, ſunk down to as low a ſtate as it had been among Pagans.

There ſtill remains upon hand, a capital branch of our hiſtory; and that is idolatry, which properly ſignifies the worſhipping viſible objects as deities. But as idolatry evidently ſprung from religious worſhip, corrupted by the ignorant and brutiſh; it will make its appearance with more advantage in the next chapter, of which religious worſhip is the ſubject.

We have thus traced with wary ſteps, the gradual progreſs of theology through many ſtages, correſponding to the gradual openings and improvements of the human mind. But though that progreſs, in almoſt all countries, appears uniform with reſpect to the order of ſucceſſion, it is far otherwiſe with reſpect to the quickneſs of ſucceſſion: nations, like individuals, make a progreſs from infancy to maturity; but they advance not with an equal pace, ſome making a rapid progreſs toward perfection in knowledge and in religion, while others remain ignorant barbarians. The religion of Hindoſtan, if we credit hiſtory or tradition,

dition, had advanced to a confiderable degree of purity and refinement, at a very early period. The Hindoftan Bible, termed *Chatahbbade* or *Shaftah*, gives an account of the creation, lapfe of the angels, and creation of man; inftructs us in the unity of the Deity, but denies his prefcience, as being inconfiftent with free will in man; all of them profound doctrines of an illuminated people, to eftablifh which a long courfe of time muft have been requifite, after wandering through errors without number. Compared with the Hindoos in theology, even the Greeks were mere favages. The Grecian gods were held to be little better than men, and their hiftory, as above mentioned, correfponds to the notion entertained of them.

In explaining the opinions of men with refpect to Deity, I have confined my view to fuch opinions as are fuggefted by principles or biaffes that make a part of common nature; omitting many whimfical notions, no better than dreams of a roving imagination. The plan delineated, fhows wonderful uniformity in the progrefs of religion through all nations. That irregular and whimfical notions are far otherwife, is not wonderful. Take the following fpecimen. The Kamfkatkans are not fo ftupidly ignorant, as to be altogether void of curiofity. They fometimes think of natural appearances.—Rain, fay they, is fome deity piffing upon them; and they imagine the

the rainbow to be a party-coloured garment, put on by him in preparing for that operation. They believe wind to be produced by a god ſhaking with violence his long hair about his head. Such tales will ſcarce amuſe children in the nurſery. The inhabitants of the iſland Celebes formerly acknowledged no gods but the ſun and the moon, which were held to be eternal. Ambition for ſuperiority made them fall out. The moon being wounded in flying from the ſun, was delivered of the earth.

Hitherto of the gradual openings of the human mind with reſpect to Deity. I cloſe this ſection with an account of ſome unſound notions concerning the conduct of Providence, and concerning ſome ſpeculative matters. I begin with the former.

In days of ignorance, the conduct of Providence is very little underſtood. Far from having any notion, that the government of this world is carried on by general laws, which are inflexible becauſe they are the beſt poſſible, every important event is attributed to an immediate interpoſition of the Deity. As the Grecian gods were thought to have bodies like men, and like men to require nouriſhment; they were imagined to act like men, forming ſhort-ſighted plans of operation, and varying them from time to time, according to exigencies. Even the wiſe Athenians had an utter averſion at philoſophers who attempted to account

for

for effects by general laws: such doctrine they thought tended to fetter the gods, and to prevent them from governing events at their pleasure. An eclipse being held a prognostic given by the gods of some grievous calamity, Anaxagoras was accused of Atheism for attempting to explain the eclipse of the moon by natural causes: he was thrown into prison, and with difficulty was relieved by the influence of Pericles. Protagoras was banished Athens for maintaining the same doctrine. Procopius overflows with signal interpositions of Providence; and Agathias, beginning at the battle of Marathon, sagely maintains, that from that time downward, there was not a battle lost but by an immediate judgment of God, for the sins of the commander, or of his army, or of one person or other. Our Saviour's doctrine with respect to those who suffered by the fall of the tower of Siloam, ought to have opened their eyes; but superstitious eyes are never opened by instruction. At the same time, it is deplorable that such belief has no good influence on manners: on the contrary, never doth wickedness so much abound as in dark times. A curious fact is related by Procopius * with respect to that sort of superstition. When Rome was besieged by the Goths and in danger of destruction, a part of the town-wall was in a tottering condition. Belisarius, proposing to fortify it, was opposed by the citizens, affirming,

* Historia Gothica, lib. 1.

ing, that it was guarded by St Peter. Procopius obferves, that the event anfwered expectation; for that the Goths, during a tedious fiege, never once attempted that weak part. He adds, that the wall remained in the fame ruinous ftate at the time of his writing. Here is a curious conceit,—Peter created a tutelar deity, able and willing to counteract the laws by which God governs the material world. And for what mighty benefit to his votaries? Only to fave them five or fifty pounds in rebuilding the crazy part of the wall.

It is no lefs inconfiftent with the regular courfe of Providence, to believe, as many formerly did, that in all doubtful cafes the Almighty, when appealed to, never fails to interpofe in favour of the right fide. The inhabitants of Conftantinople, ann. 1284, being fplit into parties about two contending patriarchs, the Emperor ordered a fire to be made in the church of St Sophia, and a paper for each party to be thrown into it; never doubting, but that God would fave from the flames the paper given in for the party whofe caufe he efpoufed. But, to the utter aftonifhment of all beholders, the flames paid not the leaft regard to either. The fame abfurd opinion gave birth to the trial by fire, by water, and by fingle combat. And it is not a little remarkable, that fuch trials were common among many nations that had no intercourfe one with another: even the enlightened people of Indoftan try crimes by dipping the hand of a fufpected

ſpected perſon in boiling oil. In caſes of doubtful proof, they recur in the kingdom of Siam, as in many other countries, to artificial proofs. One is to walk barefoot through fire. As the Siamites are accuſtomed to walk barefooted, their ſoles become hard; and thoſe who have ſkill have a good chance to eſcape without burning. The art is to ſet down their feet on the fire with all their weight, which excludes the air, and prevents the fire from burning. Another proof is by water. The accuſer and accuſed are thrown into a pond; and he who keeps the longeſt under water is declared to be in the right.— Such uniformity is there with reſpect even to ſuperſtitious opinions. Pope Gregory VII. inſiſting that the Kings of Caſtile and Aragon ſhould lay aſide their Gothic liturgy for the Romiſh, the matter was put to trial by ſingle combat; and two champions were choſen to declare by victory the opinion of God Almighty. The Emperor Otho I. obſerving the law-doctors to differ about the right of repreſentation in land-eſtates, appointed a duel; and the right of repreſentation gained the victory. If any thing can render ſuch a doctrine palatable, it is the believing in a tutelar deity, who with leſs abſurdity may interpoſe in behalf of a favourite opinion, or of a favourite people. Appian gravely reports, that when the city of Rhodes was beſieged by Mithridates, a ſtatue of the goddeſs Iſis was ſeen to dart flames of fire upon a bulky engine, raiſed by the beſiegers to overtop the wall.

Hiſtorians

Hiftorians mention an incident that happened in the ifland Celebes, founded on a belief of the fame kind with that above mentioned. About two centuries ago, fome Chriftian and fome Mahometan miffionaries made their way to that ifland. The chief king, ftruck with the fear of hell taught by both, affembled a general council; and ftretching his hands towards heaven, addreffed the following prayer to the fupreme Being. "Great God, from "thee I demand nothing but juftice, and to me "thou oweft it. Men of different religions have "come to this ifland, threatening eternal punifh-"ment to me and my people if we difobey thy "laws. What are thy laws? Speak, O my God, "who art the author of nature: thou knoweft the "bottom of our hearts, and that we can never in-"tentionally difobey thee. But if it be unwor-"thy of thy effence to employ the language of "men, I call upon my whole people, the fun "which gives me light, the earth which bears me, "the fea which furrounds my empire, and upon "thee thyfelf, to bear witnefs for me, that in the "fincerity of my heart I wifh to know thy will; "and this day I declare, that I will acknowledge "as the depofitaries of thy oracles, the firft mini-"fters of either religion that fhall land on this "ifland."

It is equally erroneous to believe, that certain ceremonies will protect one from mifchief. In the dark ages of Chriftianity, the figning with the figure

figure of a crofs, was held not only to be an antidote againft the fnares of malignant fpirits, but to infpire refolution for fupporting trials and calamities: for which reafon no Chriftian in thofe days undertook any thing of moment, till he had ufed that ceremony. It was firmly believed in France, that a gold or filver coin of St Louis, hung from the neck, was a protection againft all difeafes: and we find accordingly a hole in every remaining coin of that king, for fixing it to a ribband. In the minority of Charles VIII. of France, the three eftates, ann. 1484, fupplicated his Majefty, that he would no longer defer the being anointed with the holy oil, as the favour of Heaven was vifibly connected with that ceremony. They affirmed, that his grandfather Charles VII. never profpered till he was anointed; and that Heaven afterward fought on his fide, till the Englifh were expelled out of his kingdom *. The high altar of St Margaret's church

* That ridiculous ceremony is kept up to this day: fuch power has cuftom. Take the following fample of it: "The "Grand Prior of St Remi opens the holy phial, and gives "it to the Archbifhop, who with a golden needle takes "fome of the precious oil, about the fize of a grain of "wheat, which he mixes with confecrated ointment. The "King then proftrates himfelf before the altar on a violet-"coloured carpet, embroidered with fleurs de lys, while "they pray. Then the King rifes, and the Archbifhop "anoints him on the crown of the head, on the ftomach, "on the two elbows, and on the joints of the arms. Af-"ter

church in the iſland of Icolmkill, was covered with a plate of blue marble finely veined; which has ſuffered from a ſuperſtitious conceit, that the ſmalleſt bit of it will preſerve a ſhip from ſinking. It has accordingly been carried off piece-meal; and at preſent there is ſcarce enough left to make an experiment. In the Sadder, certain prayers are enjoined when one ſneezes or piſſes, in order to chaſe away the devil. Cart-wheels in Liſbon, are compoſed of two clumſy boards nailed together in a circular form. Though the noiſe is intolerable, the axles are never greaſed; the noiſe, ſay they, frightens the devil from hurting their oxen.

Nay, ſo far has ſuperſtition been carried, as to found a belief, that the devil by magic can controul the courſe of Providence. A Greek biſhop having dreamed that a certain miracle had failed by magic, the ſuppoſed magician and his ſon were condemned to die, without the leaſt evidence but the dream. Monteſquieu collects a number of circumſtances, each of which, though all extremely improbable, ought to have been clearly made out, in

" ter the ſeveral anointings, the Archbiſhop of Rheims, " the Biſhops of Laon and Beauvais cloſe the openings of the " ſhirt; the High Chamberlain puts on the tunic and the " royal mantle; the King then kneels again, and is a- " nointed in the palms of his hands." Is this farce leſs ludicrous than that of an Engliſh King curing the King's evil with a touch?

in order to prove the crime *. The Emperor Theodore Lafcaris, imagining magic to be the caufe of his diftemper, put the perfons fufpected to the trial of holding a red-hot iron without being burnt. In the capitularies of Charlemagne, in the canons of feveral councils, and in the ancient laws of Norway, punifhments are enacted againft thofe who are fuppofed able to raife tempefts, termed *Tempeftarii*. During the time of Catharine de Medicis, there was in the court of France a jumble of politics, gallantry, luxury, debauchery, fuperftition, and atheifm. It was common to take the refemblance of enemies in wax, in order to torment them by roafting the figure at a flow fire, and pricking it with needles. If an enemy happened in one inftance of a thoufand to pine and die, the charm was eftablifhed for ever. Sorcery and witchcraft were fo univerfally believed in England, that in a preamble to a ftatute of Henry VIII. ann. 1511, it is fet forth, "That fmiths, weavers, "and women, boldly take upon them great cures, "in which they partly ufe forcery and witch-"craft." The firft printers, who were Germans, having carried their books to Paris for fale, were condemned by the parliament to be burnt alive as forcerers; and did not efcape punifhment but by a precipitate flight. It had indeed much appearance of forcery, that a man could write fo many copies of a book, without the flighteft variation.

Superftition

* L'Efprit des loix, lib. 12. ch. 5.

Superſtition flouriſhes in times of danger and diſmay. During the civil wars of France and of England, ſuperſtition was carried to extravagance. Every one believed in magic, charms, ſpells, ſorcery, witchcraft, &c. The moſt abſurd tales paſt current as goſpel truths. Every one is acquainted with the hiſtory of the Ducheſs of Beaufort, who was ſaid to have made a compact with the devil, to procure Henry IV. of France for her lover. This ridiculous ſtory was believed through all France; and is reported as a truth by the Duke de Sully. Muſt not ſuperſtition have been at a high pitch, when that great man was infected with it? James Howel, eminent for knowledge and for the figure he made during the civil wars of England, relates as an undoubted truth an abſurd fiction concerning the town of Hamelen, that the devil with a bagpipe enticed all the rats out of the town, and drowned them in a lake; and becauſe his promiſed reward was denied, that he made the children ſuffer the ſame fate. Upon a manuſcript doubting of the exiſtence of witches, he obſerves, "that there are ſome men of a mere negative ge-"nius, who croſs and puzzle the cleareſt truths "with their *but*, *yet*, *if*: they will flap the lie in "Truth's teeth, though ſhe viſibly ſtands before "their face without any vizard. Such perverſe "croſs-grained ſpirits are not to be dealt with by "arguments, but palpable proofs: as if one deny "that the fire burns, or that he hath a noſe on his

" face; there is no way to deal with him, but
" to pull him by the tip of the one and put his
" finger into the other."

In an age of ſuperſtition, men of the greateſt judgment are infected: in an enlightened age, ſuperſtition is confined among the vulgar. Would one imagine that the great Louis of France is an exception. It is hard to ſay, whether his vanity or his ſuperſtition was the moſt eminent. The Duke of Luxembourg was his favourite and his moſt ſucceſsful general. In order to throw the Duke out of favour, his rivals accuſed him of having a compact with the devil. The King permitted him to be treated with great brutality, on evidence no leſs fooliſh and abſurd, than that on which old women were ſome time ago condemned as witches.

There are many examples of the attributing extraordinary virtue to certain things, in themſelves of no ſignificancy. The Hungarians were poſſeſſed of a golden crown, ſent from heaven with the peculiar virtue, as they believed, of beſtowing upon the perſon who wore it, an undoubted title to be their king.

But the moſt extraordinary effort of abſurd ſuperſtition, is a perſuaſion, that one may controul the courſe of Providence, by making a downright bargain with God Almighty to receive from him *quid pro quo*. A herd of Tartars in Siberia, named by the Ruſſians *Baravinſkoi*, have in every hut a wooden

en idol about eighteen inches high; to which they addreſs their prayers for plenty of game in hunting, promiſing it, if ſucceſsful, a new coat or a new bonnet: a ſort of bargain abundantly brutiſh; and yet more excuſable in mere ſavages, than what is made with the Virgin Mary by enlightened Roman Catholics; who, upon condition of her relieving them from diſtreſs, promiſe her a waxen taper to burn on her altar. Philip II. of Spain made a vow, that, upon condition of gaining the battle of St Quintin, he would build the monaſtery of Eſcurial; as if an eſtabliſhment for ſome idle monks, could be a motive with the Great God to vary the courſe of his Providence *. Beſide the abſurdity of thinking that ſuch vows can have the effect to alter the eſtabliſhed laws of Providence; they betray a moſt contemptible notion of the Deity, as if his favours, like a horſe or a cow, could be purchaſed with money.

But, however looſe and disjointed events appear to the ignorant, when viewed as paſt or as paſſing; future events take on a very different appearance. The doctrine of prognoſtics, is evidently founded

* Having gained the battle of St Quintin on the feſtival of St Laurence, Philip reckoned himſelf obliged to the ſaint for this victory, as much as to God Almighty; and accordingly, he not only built the monaſtery he had vowed, but alſo a church for the ſaint, and a palace for himſelf, all under one roof: and, what is not a little ludicrous, the edifice is built in reſemblance of a gridiron, which, according to the legend, was the inſtrument of Laurence's martyrdom.

upon a ſuppoſition that future events are unalterably fixed; for otherwiſe that doctrine would appear abſurd, even to the ignorant. No bias in human nature has greater influence, than curioſity about futurity; which in dark ages governs without controul: men with no leſs folly than induſtry have ranſacked the earth, the ſea, the air, and even the ſtars, for prognoſtics of future events. The Greeks had their oracles, the Romans their augurs, and all the world their omens. The Grecian oracles and the Roman auguries, are evidently built upon their belief of tutelar deities; and the numberleſs omens that influence weak people in every country, ſeem to reſt upon the ſame foundation *. Ancient hiſtories are ſtuffed with omens, prodigies, and prognoſtics: Livy overflows with fooleries of that kind. Endleſs are the adverſe omens reported by Appian of Alexandria, that are ſaid to have given warning of the defeat of Craſſus by the Parthians; and no fewer in number are thoſe which happened at the death of the Emperor Hadrian, if we believe Spartianus. Lampridius, with great gravity, recites the omens which prognoſticated

* It is no wonder that the Romans were ſuperſtitiouſly addicted to omens and auguries: like mere ſavages, they put no value upon any ſcience but that of war; and, for that reaſon, they baniſhed all philoſophers, as uſeleſs members of ſociety. Thus, that nation, ſo fierce and ſo great in war, ſurrendered themſelves blindly to ſuperſtition, and became ſlaves to imaginary evils. Even their graveſt hiſtorians were deeply tainted with that diſeaſe.

prognosticated that Alexander Severus would be Emperor: he was born the same day on which Alexander the Great died: he was brought forth in a temple dedicated to Alexander the Great: he was named *Alexander*; and an old woman gave to his mother, a pigeon's egg of a purple colour produced on his birth-day. A comet is an infallible prognostic of the death of a king. But of what king? Why, of the king who dies next.— Suetonius, with the solemnity of a pulpit-instructor, informs us, that the death of the Emperor Claudius was predicted by a comet; and of Tiberius, by the fall of a tower during an earthquake *. Such opinions, having a foundation in our nature, take fast hold of the mind, when invigorated by education and example. Even philosophy is not sufficient to eradicate them but by slow degrees: witness Tacitus, the most profound of all historians, who cannot forbear to usher in the death of the Emperor Otho, with a foolish account of a strange unknown bird appearing at that time. He indeed, with decent reserve, mentions it only as a fact reported by others; but from the glow of his narrative it is evident, that the story had made an impression upon him. When Onosander wrote his military institutions, which was in the fourth century, the intrails of an animal sacrificed were still depended on as a prognostic of good or bad fortune.

* Charlemagne, though an eminent astronomer for his time, was afraid of comets and eclipses.

fortune. And in chap. 15. he endeavours to account for the misfortunes that ſometimes happened after the moſt favourable prognoſtics; laying the blame, not upon the prognoſtic, but upon ſome croſs accident that was not foreſeen by the tutelar deity. The ancient Germans drew many of their omens from horſes: "Proprium gentis, equorum "præſagia ac monitus experiri. Publicè aluntur "iiſdem nemoribus ac lucis, candidè, et nullo "mortali opere contacti, quos preſſos ſacro curru, "ſacerdos, ac rex, vel princeps civitatis, comitan-"tur, hinnitusque ac fremitus obſervant. Nec "ulli auſpicio major fides, non ſolùm apud ple-"bem, ſed apud proceres, apud ſacerdotes * †." There is ſcarce a thing ſeen or imagined, but what the inhabitants of Madagaſcar conſider as a prognoſtic of ſome future event. The Hindoos rely on the augury of birds, preciſely as the old Romans did. Though there is not the ſlighteſt probability, that an impending misfortune was ever prevented by ſuch prognoſtics; yet the deſire of knowing future events is ſo deeply rooted in our nature,

* "It is peculiar to that people, to deduce omens and pre-"ſages from horſes. Theſe animals are maintained at the "public expence, in groves and foreſts, and are not allowed "to be polluted with any work for the uſe of man; but being "yoked in the ſacred chariot, the prieſt, and the king, or chief "of the ſtate, attend them, and carefully obſerve their neigh-"ings and ſnortings. The greateſt faith is given to this me-"thod of augury, both among the vulgar and the nobles."

† Tacitus De moribus Germanorum, cap. 10.

nature, that omens will always prevail among the vulgar, in ſpite of the cleareſt light of philoſophy *.

With reſpect to prophecies in particular, one apology may be made for them, that no other prognoſtic of futurity is leſs apt to do miſchief. What Procopius † obſerves of the Sybilline oracles, is equally applicable to all prophecies, "That it is "above the ſagacity of man to explain any of "them before the event happen. Matters are "there handled, not in any order, nor in a conti-"nued diſcourſe: but after mentioning the diſ-"treſſes of Africa, for example, they give a ſlight "touch at the Perſians, the Romans, the Aſſy-"rians; then returning to the Romans, they fall "ſlap-daſh upon the calamities of Britain." A curious example of this obſervation, is a book of prophecies compoſed in Scotland by Thomas Learmont, commonly called *Thomas the Rhymer*, becauſe the book is in rhyme. Plutarch in the life of Cicero reports, that a ſpectre appeared to Cicero's nurſe, and foretold, that the child would become a great ſupport to the Roman ſtate; and moſt

* Is it not mortifying to human pride, that a great philoſopher [*Bacon*] ſhould think like the vulgar upon this ſubject? With reſpect to rejoicings in London upon the marriage of the daughter of Henry VII. of England to James IV. of Scotland, he ſays, "not from any affection to the Scots, but from "a ſecret inſtinct and inſpiration of the advantages that would "accrue from the match."

† Gothica Hiſtoria, lib. I.

moft innocently he makes the following reflection, "This might have paffed for an idle tale, had not "Cicero demonftrated the truth of the prediction." At that rate, if a prediction happen to prove true, it is a real prophecy; if otherwife, it is an idle tale. There have been prophecies not altogether fo well guarded as the Sybilline oracles. Napier, inventor of the logarithms, found the day of judgment to be predicted in the Revelation; and named the very day, which unfortunately he furvived. He made another prediction, but prudently named a day fo diftant as to be in no hazard of blufhing a fecond time. Michel Stifels, a German clergyman, fpent moft of his life in attempting to difcover the day of judgment; and at laft announced to his parifhioners, that it would happen within a year. The parifhioners, refolving to make the beft of a bad bargain, fpent their time merrily, taking no care to lay up provifions for another year; and fo nice was their computation, as at the end of the year to have not a morfel remaining, either of food or of induftry. The famous Jurieu has fhewn great ingenuity in explaining prophecies; of which take the following inftance. In his book, intituled *Accomplifhment of the Prophecies*, he demonftrates, that the beaft in the Apocalypfe, which held the *poculum aureum plenum abominationum* *, is the Pope; and his reafon is, that the initial letters of thefe four Latin words compofe

* "The golden cup full of abominations."

compofe the word *papa;* a very fingular prophecy indeed, that is a prophecy in Latin, but in no other language. The candid reader will advert, that fuch prophecies as relate to our Saviour and tend to afcertain the truth of his miffion, fall not under the foregoing reafoning; for they do not anticipate futurity, by producing foreknowledge of future events. They were not underftood till our Saviour appeared among men; and then they were clearly underftood as relative to him.

There is no end of fuperftition in its various modes. In dark times it was believed univerfally, that by certain forms and invocations, the fpirits of the dead could be called upon to reveal future events. A lottery in Florence, gainful to the government and ruinous to the people, gives great fcope to fuperftition. A man who purpofes to purchafe tickets, muft faft fix and thirty hours, muft repeat a certain number of Ave Maries and Pater Nofters, muft not fpeak to a living creature, muft not go to bed, muft continue in prayer to the Virgin and to faints, till fome propitious faint appear and declare the numbers that are to be fuccefsful. The man, fatigued with fafting, praying, and expectation, falls afleep. Occupied with the thoughts he had when awake, he dreams that a faint appears, and mentions the lucky numbers. If he be difappointed, he is vexed at his want of memory; but trufts in the faint as an infallible oracle. Again

he

he falls asleep, again sees a vision, and again is disappointed.

Lucky and unlucky days, which were so much relied on as even to be marked in the Greek and Roman kalendars, make an appendix to prophecies. The Tartars never undertake any thing of moment on a Wednesday, being held by them unlucky. The Nogayan Tartars hold every thirteenth year to be unlucky: they will not even wear a sword that year, believing that it would be their death; and they maintain, that none of their warriors ever returned who went upon an expedition in one of these years. They pass that time in fasting and prayer, and during it never marry. —The inhabitants of Madagascar have days fortunate and unfortunate with respect to the birth of children: they destroy without mercy every child that is born on an unfortunate day.

There are unlucky names as well as unlucky days. Julien Cardinal de Medicis, chosen Pope, was inclined to keep his own name. But it being observed to him by the cardinals, says Guichardin, that the popes who retained their own name had all of them died within the year, he took the name of Clement, and was Clement VII. As John was held an unlucky name for a king, John, heir to the Crown of Scotland, was persuaded to change his name into Robert; and he was Robert III.

I close this important article with a reflection that will make an impression upon every rational person.

perſon. The knowledge of future events, as far as it tends to influence our conduct, is inconſiſtent with a ſtate of activity, ſuch as Providence has allotted to man in this life. It would deprive him of hopes and fears, and leave him nothing to deliberate upon, nor any end to proſecute. In a word, it would put an end to his activity, and reduce him to be merely a paſſing being. Providence therefore has wiſely drawn a veil over future events, affording us no light for prying into them but ſagacity and experience.

Theſe are a few of the numberleſs abſurd opinions about the conduct of Providence, that have prevailed among Chriſtians, and ſtill prevail among ſome of them. Many opinions no leſs abſurd have prevailed about ſpeculative points. I confine myſelf to one or two inſtances; for to make a complete liſt would require a volume. The firſt I ſhall mention, and the moſt noted, is tranſubſtantiation; a doctrine in which it is aſſerted, firſt, that the bread and wine in the ſacrament are converted into the body and blood of our Saviour; next, that his body and blood exiſts wholly and entirely in every particular ſacrament adminiſtered in the Chriſtian world even at the ſame inſtant of time. This article of faith, though it has not the leaſt influence on practice, is reckoned ſo eſſential to ſalvation, as to be placed above every moral duty. The following text is appealed to as its ſole foundation. "And as they were eating, Jeſus took "bread,

"bread, and bleſſed it, and brake it, and gave it to "the diſciples, and ſaid, Take, eat; this is my "body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, "and gave it to them, ſaying, Drink ye all of it: "for this is my blood of the new teſtament, which "is ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins. But "I ſay unto you, I will not drink henceforth of "this fruit of the vine, until that day when I "drink it new with you in my Father's king-"dom *." That this is a metaphor, muſt ſtrike every one: the paſſage cannot even bear a literal meaning, conſidering the final clauſe; for ſurely the moſt zealous Roman Catholic believes not, that Chriſtians are to drink new wine with their Saviour in the kingdom of heaven. At the ſame time, it is not ſo much as inſinuated, that there was here any miraculous tranſubſtantiation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of our Saviour; nor is it inſinuated, that the apoſtles believed they were eating the fleſh of their maſter, and drinking his blood. St John, the favourite apoſtle, mentions not a word of this ceremony, which he certainly would not have omitted, had he imagined it an eſſential article of faith.

But ſuppoſing tranſubſtantiation were clearly expreſſed in this text, yet men of underſtanding will be loth to admit a meaning that contradicts their five ſenſes. They will reflect, that no man now living ever ſaw the original books of the New Teſtament;

* St Matthew, xxvi. 26. &c.

Teſtament; nor are they certain, that the editions we have, are copied directly from the originals. Every remove from them is liable to errors, which may juſtly create a ſuſpicion of texts that contradict reaſon and common ſenſe. Add, that the bulk of Chriſtians have not even a copy from the original to build their faith upon; but only a tranſlation into another language. But the ſecond branch of this article is obvious to a ſtill ſtronger objection than of its contradicting our ſenſes: it is a direct inconſiſtence, as we cannot even conceive it poſſible that the ſame body or thing can be in two different places at the ſame time.

And this leads to what chiefly determined me to ſelect that inſtance. God and nature have beſtowed upon us the faculty of reaſon, for diſtinguiſhing truth from falſehood. If, by reaſoning with candour and impartiality, we diſcover a propoſition to be true or falſe, it is not in our power to remain indifferent: we muſt judge, and our belief muſt be regulated by our judgment. I ſay more, to judge is a duty we owe our Maker; for to what purpoſe has he beſtowed reaſon upon us, but in order to direct our judgment? At the ſame time, we may depend on it as an intuitive truth, that God will never impoſe any belief on us, contradictory, not only to our reaſon, but to our ſenſes.

The following objection however will perhaps reliſh more with people of plain underſtanding.

Tranſubſtantiation

Tranfubftantiation is a very extraordinary miracle, reiterated every day and in every corner of the earth, by priefts not always remarkable either for piety or for morality. Now I demand an anfwer to the following plain queftion: To what good end or purpofe is fuch a profufion of miracles fubfervient? I fee none. But I difcover a very bad one, if they have any influence; which is, that they accuftom the Roman Catholics to more cruelty and barbarity, than even the groffeft favages are ever guilty of: fome of thefe indeed devour the flefh of their enemies; but none of them the flefh of their friends, efpecially of their greateft friend. But to do juftice to people of that religion, I am confident, that this fuppofed miracle has no influence whatever upon their manners: to me it appears impoffible for any man ferioufly to believe, that the bread and wine ufed at the Lord's fupper, is actually converted into the body and blood of our Saviour. The Romifh church requires the belief of tranfubftantiation; and a zealous Catholic, out of pure obedience, thinks he believes it. Convince once a man that falvation depends on belief, and he will believe any thing; that is, he will imagine that he believes: *Credo quia impoffibile eft* *.

That

* A traveller defcribing the Virgin Mary's houfe at Loretto, has the following reflection. "When there are fo many faints "endued with fuch miraculous powers, fo many relics, and "fo

That our firſt reformers, who were prone to differ from the Romiſh faith, ſhould adopt this doctrine, ſhews the ſupreme influence of ſuperſtition. The Lutherans had not even the excuſe of inattention: after ſerious examination, they added one abſurdity more; teaching, that the bread and wine are converted into the body and blood of our Saviour, and yet remain bread and wine as at firſt; which is termed by them *conſubſtantiation*. I am perſuaded, that at this time not a ſingle man of them harbours ſuch a thought.

Many

" ſo many impregnated wells, each of them able to cure the " moſt dangerous diſeaſes; one would wonder, that phyſi- " cians could live there, or others die. But people die here as " elſewhere; and even churchmen, who preach upon the " miracles wrought by relics, grow ſick and die like other " men." It is one thing to believe: it is another thing to fancy that we believe. In the year 1666 a Jew named *Sabatai Levi* appeared at Smyrna, pretending to be the true Meſſiah, and was acknowledged to be ſo by many. The Grand Signior, for proof of his miſſion, inſiſted for a miracle; propoſing that he ſhould preſent himſelf as a mark to be ſhot at, and promiſing to believe that he was the Meſſiah, if he remained unwounded. Sabatai, declining the trial, turned Mahometan to ſave his life. But obſerve the blindneſs of ſuperſtition: though Sabatai was ſeen every day walking the ſtreets of Conſtantinople in the Turkiſh habit, many Jews inſiſted that the true Sabatai was taken up into heaven, leaving only behind him his ſhadow; and probably they moſt piouſly fancied that they believed ſo.

Many perſons, impenetrable by a ſerious argument, can diſcover falſehood when put in a ridiculous light. It requires, I am ſenſible, a very delicate hand to attack a grave ſubject with ridicule as a teſt of truth; and for that reaſon, I forbear to offer any thing of my own. But I will ſet before my readers ſome excerpts from a book of abſolute authority with Roman Catholics. Though tranſubſtantiation be there handled in the moſt ſerious manner, with all the ceremonies and punctilios that naturally flow from it, yet in my judgment it is happily contrived to give it a moſt ridiculous appearance. The book is the Roman Miſſal, from which the following is a literal tranſlation.

"Maſs may be deficient in the matter, in the "form, in the miniſter, or in the action. Firſt, "in the matter. If the bread be not of wheat, "or if there be ſo great a mixture of other grain "that it cannot be called wheat-bread, or if any "way corrupted, it does not make a ſacrament. "If it be made with roſe-water, or any other "diſtilled water, it is doubtful whether it make a "ſacrament or not. Though corruption have "begun, or though it be leavened, it makes a ſacrament, but the celebrator ſins grievouſly.

"If the celebrator, before conſecration, obſerve that the hoſt is corrupted, or is not "of wheat, he muſt take another hoſt: if after conſecration, he muſt ſtill take another and

"ſwallow

" swallow it, after which he must also swallow the
" first, or give it to another, or preserve it in some
" place with reverence. But if he have swal-
" lowed the first before observing its defects, he
" must nevertheless swallow also the perfect host;
" because the precept about the perfection of the
" sacrament, is of greater weight than that of ta-
" king it fasting. If the consecrated host disap-
" pear by an accident, as by wind, by a miracle,
" or by some animal, another must be consecra-
" ted.

" If the wine be quite sour or putrid, or made
" of unripe grapes, or be mixed with so much
" water as to spoil the wine, it is no sacrament.
" If the wine have begun to sour or to be cor-
" rupted, or be quite new, or not mixed with
" water, or mixed with rose-water or other di-
" stilled water, it makes a sacrament, but the ce-
" lebrator sins grievously.

" If the priest, before consecration, observe that
" the materials are not proper, he must stop, if
" proper materials cannot be got; but after con-
" secration, he must proceed, to avoid giving scan-
" dal. If proper materials can be procured by
" waiting, he must wait for them, that the sacri-
" fice may not remain imperfect.

" Second, in form. If any of the words of
" consecration be omitted, or any of them be
" changed into words of a different meaning, it
" is no sacrament: if they be changed into words

"of the same meaning, it makes a sacrament;
"but the celebrator sins grievously.

"Third, in the minister. If he does not in-
"tend to make a sacrament, but to cheat; if
"there be any part of the wine, or any wafer that
"he has not in his eye, and does not intend to
"consecrate; if he have before him eleven wafers,
"and intends to consecrate only ten, not deter-
"mining what ten he intends: in these cases the
"consecration does not hold, because intention
"is requisite. If he think there are ten only,
"and intends to consecrate all before him, they
"are all consecrated; therefore priests ought al-
"ways to have such intention. If the priest,
"thinking he has but one wafer, shall, after the
"consecration, find two sticking together, he must
"take them both. And he must take off all the
"remains of the consecrated matter; for they all
"belong to the same sacrifice. If in consecra-
"ting, the intention be not actual by wandering
"of mind, but virtual in approaching the altar,
"it makes a sacrament: though priests should be
"careful to have intention both virtual and ac-
"tual.

"Beside intention, the priest may be deficient
"in disposition of mind. If he be suspended, or
"degraded, or excommunicated, or under mortal
"sin, he makes a sacrament, but sins grievously.
"He may be deficient also in disposition of body.
"If he have not fasted from midnight, if he have
"tasted

"tasted water, or any other drink or meat, even
" in the way of medicine, he cannot celebrate
" nor communicate. If he have taken meat or
" drink before midnight, even though he have not
" slept nor digested it, he does not sin. But on
" account of the perturbation of mind, which bars
" devotion, it is prudent to refrain.

" If any remains of meat, sticking in the mouth,
" be swallowed with the host, they do not prevent
" communicating, provided they be swallowed,
" not as meat, but as spittle. The same is to
" be said, if in washing the mouth a drop of
" water be swallowed, provided it be against our
" will.

" Fourth, in the action. If any requisite be
" wanting, it is no sacrament; for example, if it
" be celebrated out of holy ground, or upon an
" altar not consecrated, or not covered with three
" napkins: if there be no wax candles; if it be
" not celebrated between day-break and noon;
" if the celebrator have not said matins with
" lauds; if he omit any of the sacerdotal robes;
" if these robes and the napkins be not blessed by
" a bishop; if there be no clerk present to serve,
" or one who ought not to serve, a woman, for
" example; if there be no chalice, the cup of
" which is gold, or silver, or pewter; if the vest-
" ment be not of clean linen adorned with silk
" in the middle, and blessed by a bishop; if
" the priest celebrate with his head covered; if

" there be no miſſal preſent, though he have it by
" heart.

" If a gnat or ſpider fall into the cup after con-
" ſecration, the prieſt muſt ſwallow it with the
" blood, if he can: otherwiſe, let him take it
" out, waſh it with wine, burn it, and throw it
" with the waſhings into holy ground. If poiſon
" fall into the cup, the blood muſt be poured on
" tow or on a linen cloth, remain till it be dry,
" then be burnt, and the aſhes be thrown upon
" holy ground. If the hoſt be poiſoned, it muſt
" be kept in a tabernacle till it be corrupted.

" If the blood freeze in winter, put warm cloths
" about the cup: if that be not ſufficient, put the
" cup in boiling water.

" If any of Chriſt's blood fall on the ground by
" negligence, it muſt be licked up with the tongue,
" and the place ſcraped: the ſcrapings muſt be
" burnt, and the aſhes buried in holy ground.

" If the prieſt vomit the euchariſt, and the ſpe-
" cies appear entire, it muſt be licked up moſt re-
" verently. If a nauſea prevent that to be done,
" it muſt be kept till it be corrupted. If the
" ſpecies do not appear, let the vomit be burnt,
" and the aſhes thrown upon holy ground."

As the foregoing article has beyond intention ſwelled to an enormous ſize, I ſhall add but one other article, which ſhall be extremely ſhort; and that is the creed of Athanaſius. It is a heap of unintelligible jargon; and yet we are appointed

to believe every article of it, under the pain of eternal damnation. As it enjoins belief of rank contradictions, it seems purposely calculated to be a test of slavish submission to the tyrannical authority of a proud and arrogant priest *.

CHAP. III.

Religious Worship.

IN the foregoing chapter are traced the gradual advances of the sense of Deity, from its imperfect state among savages to its maturity among enlightened nations; displaying to us one great Being, to whom all other beings owe their existence, who made the world, and who governs it by perfect laws. And our perception of Deity, arising from that sense, is fortified by an intuitive proposition, that there necessarily must exist some being who had no beginning. Considering the Deity as the author of our existence, we owe him gratitude;

* Bishop Burnet seems doubtful whether this creed was composed by Athanasius. His doubts, in my apprehension, are scarce sufficient to weigh against the unanimous opinion of the Christian church.

tude; confidering him as governor of the world, we owe him obedience: and upon thefe duties is founded the obligation we are under to worfhip him. Further, God made man for fociety, and implanted in his nature the moral fenfe to direct his conduct in that ftate. From thefe premifes, may it not with certainty be inferred to be the will of God, that men fhould obey the dictates of the moral fenfe in fulfilling every duty of juftice and benevolence? Thefe moral duties, it would appear, are our chief bufinefs in this life; being enforced not only by a moral but by a religious principle.

Morality, as laid down in a former fketch, confifts of two great branches, the moral fenfe which unfolds the duty we owe to our fellow-creatures, and an active moral principle which prompts us to perform that duty. Natural religion confifts alfo of two great branches, the fenfe of Deity which unfolds our duty to our Maker, and the active principle of devotion which prompts us to perform our duty to him. The univerfality of the fenfe of Deity proves it to be innate; the fame reafon proves the principle of devotion to be innate; for all men agree in worfhipping fuperior beings, whatever difference there may be in the mode of worfhip.

Both branches of the duty we owe to God, that of worfhipping him, and that of obeying his will with refpect to our fellow-creatures, are fummed up

up by the Prophet Micah in the following emphatic words: "He hath shewed thee, O man, what "is good: and what doth the Lord require of "thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to "walk humbly with thy God?" The two articles first mentioned, are moral duties regarding our fellow-creatures: and as to such, what is required of us is to do our duty to others; not only as directed by the moral sense, but as being the will of our Maker, to whom we owe absolute obedience. That branch of our duty is reserved for a second section: at present we are to treat of religious worship, included in the third article, the walking humbly with our God.

SECT. I.

Religious Worship respecting the Deity singly.

THE obligation we are under to worship God, or to walk humbly with him, is, as observed above, founded on the two great principles of gratitude and obedience; both of them requiring fundamentally a pure heart, and a well-disposed mind. But heart-worship is alone not sufficient: there are over and above required external signs, testifying to others the sense we have of these duties, and a firm resolution to perform them. That such

such is the will of God, will appear as follows. The principle of devotion, like most of our other principles, partakes of the imperfection of our nature: yet, however faint originally, it is capable of being greatly invigorated by cultivation and exercise. Private exercise is not sufficient. Nature, and consequently the God of nature, require public exercise or public worship: for devotion is communicative, like joy or grief *; and by mutual communication in a numerous assembly, is greatly invigorated. A regular habit of expressing publicly our gratitude and resignation, never fails to purify the mind, tending to wean it from every unlawful pursuit. This is the true motive of public worship; not what is commonly inculcated, That it is required from us, as a testimony to our Maker of our obedience to his laws: God, who knows the heart, needs no such testimony †.

The

* Elements of Criticism, vol. i. p. 180. edit. 5.

† Arnobius (*Adversus gentes, lib. 1.*) accounts rationally for the worship we pay to the Deity: "Huic omnes ex more "prosternimur, hunc collatis precibus adoramus, ab hoc justa, "et honesta, et auditu ejus condigna, deposcimus. Non quo "ipse desideret supplices nos esse, aut amet substerni tot mil-"lium venerationem videre: Utilitas hæc nostra est, et com-"modi nostri rationem spectans. Nam quia proni ad culpas, "et ad libidinis varios appetitus, vitio sumus infirmitatis in-"genitæ, patitur se semper nostris cogitationibus concipi: ut "dum illum oramus, et mereri ejus contendimus munera, ac-

"cipiamus

The setting apart one day in seven for public worship is not a pious institution merely, but highly moral. With regard to the latter, all men are equal in the presence of God; and when a congregation pray for mercy and protection, every one must be inflamed with good-will and brotherly love to every one.

In the next place, the serious and devout tone of mind inspired by public worship, suggests naturally self-examination. Retired from the bustle of the world on that day of rest, the errors we have been guilty of are recalled to memory: we are afflicted for these errors, and are firmly resolved to be more on our guard in time coming. In short, Sunday is only a day of rest from worldly concerns, in order to be more usefully employed upon those that are internal. Sunday accordingly is a day of account; and a candid account every

" cipiamus innocentiæ voluntatem, et ab omni nos labe de-
" lictorum omnium amputatione purgemus."—[*In English thus:* " It is our custom, to prostrate ourselves before him;
" and we ask of him such gifts only as are consistent with
" justice and with honour, and suitable to the character of
" the Being whom we adore. Not that he receives pleasure
" or satisfaction from the humble veneration of thousands of
" his creatures. From this we ourselves derive benefit and
" advantage; for being the slaves of appetite, and prone to
" err from the weakness of our nature, when we address our-
" selves to God in prayer, and study by our actions to merit
" his approbation, we gain at least the wish, and the inclina-
" tion, to be virtuous."]

every ſeventh day, is the beſt preparation for the great day of account. A perſon who diligently follows out this preparatory diſcipline, will ſeldom be at a loſs to anſwer for his conduct, called upon by God or man. This conſideration leads me neceſſarily to condemn a practice authoriſed among Chriſtians with very few exceptions, that of abandoning to diverſion and merriment what remains of Sunday after public worſhip, parties of pleaſure, dancing, gaming, any thing that trifles away the time without a ſerious thought; as if the purpoſe were to cancel every virtuous impreſſion made at public worſhip.

Unhappily, this ſalutary inſtitution can only be preſerved in vigour during the days of piety and virtue. Power and opulence are the darling objects of every nation; and yet in every nation poſſeſſed of power and opulence virtue ſubſides, ſelfiſhneſs prevails, and ſenſuality becomes the ruling paſſion. Then it is, that the moſt ſacred inſtitutions, firſt, loſe their hold, next, are diſregarded, and at laſt are made a ſubject for ridicule.

I ſhall only add upon the general head, that lawgivers ought to avoid with caution the enforcing public worſhip by rewards and puniſhments: human laws cannot reach the heart, in which the eſſence of worſhip conſiſts: they may indeed bring on a liſtleſs habit of worſhip, by ſeparating the external act from the internal affection, than which nothing is more hurtful to true religion. The utmoſt

most that can be ſafely ventured, is to bring public worſhip under cenſorian powers, as a matter of police, for preſerving good order, and for preventing bad example.

The religion of Confucius, profeſſed by the *literati* and perſons of rank in China and Tonquin, conſiſts in a deep inward veneration for the God or King of heaven, and in the practice of every moral virtue. They have neither temples, nor prieſts, nor any ſettled form of external worſhip: every one adores the ſupreme Being in the manner he himſelf thinks beſt. This is indeed the moſt refined ſyſtem of religion that ever took place among men; but it is not fitted for the human race; an excellent religion it would be for angels; but is far too refined even for ſages and philoſophers.

Proceeding to deviations from the genuine worſhip required by our Maker, and groſs deviations there have been, I begin with that ſort of worſhip which is influenced by fear, and which for that reaſon is univerſal among ſavages. The American ſavages believe, that there are inferior deities without end, moſt of them prone to miſchief; they neglect the ſupreme Deity becauſe he is good; and direct their worſhip to ſoothe the malevolent inferior deities from doing harm. The inhabitants of the Molucca iſlands, who believe the exiſtence of malevolent beings ſubordinate to the ſupreme benevolent Being, confine their worſhip

to

to the former, in order to avert their wrath; and one branch of their worship is, to set meat before them, hoping that when the belly is full, there will be less inclination to mischief. The worship of the inhabitants of Java is much the same. The Negroes of Benin worship the devil, as Drapper expresses it, and sacrifice to him both men and beasts. They acknowledge indeed a supreme Being, who created the universe, and governs it by his providence: but they regard him not: "for," say they, "it is needless, if not impertinent, to "invoke a being, who, good and gracious, is in-"capable of injuring or molesting us." Gratitude, it would appear, is not a ruling principle among savages.

The austerities and penances that are practised in almost all religions, spring from the same root. One way to please invisible malignant powers, is to make ourselves as miserable as possible. Hence the horrid penances of the Faquirs in Hindostan, who outdo in mortification whatever is reported of the ancient Christian Anchorites. Some of these Faquirs continue for life in one posture: some never lie down: some have always their arms raised above their head: and some mangle their bodies with knives and scourges. The town of Jagrenate in Hindostan is frequented by pilgrims, some of them from places 300 leagues distant; and they travel, not by walking or riding, but by measuring the road with the length of their bodies;

bodies; in which mode of loco-motion, fome of them confume years before they complete their pilgrimage. A religious fect made its way fome centuries ago into Japan, termed *Bubfdoifts*, from *Bubs*, the founder. This fect has prevailed over the ancient fect of the Sintos, chiefly by its aufterity and mortifications. The fpirit of this fect infpires nothing but exceffive fear of the gods, who are painted prone to vengeance and always offended. Thefe fectaries pafs moft of their time in tormenting themfelves, in order to expiate imaginary faults; and they are treated by their priefts with a degree of defpotifm and cruelty, that is not paralleled but by the inquifitors of Spain. Their manners are fierce, cruel, and unrelenting, derived from the nature of their fuperftition. The notion of invifible malevolent powers, formerly univerfal, is not to this hour eradicated, even among Chriftians; for which I appeal to the faftings and flagellations among Roman Catholics, held by them to be an effential part of religion. People infected with religious horrors, are never ferioufly convinced that an upright heart and found morality make the effence of religion. The doctrine of the Janfenifts concerning repentance and mortification, fhows evidently, however they may deceive themfelves, that they have an impreffion of the Deity as a malevolent being. They hold the guilt contracted by Adam's fall to be a heinous fin, which ought to be expiated by acts of mortification,

mortification, ſuch as the torturing and macerating the body with painful labour, exceſſive abſtinence, continual prayer and contemplation. Their penances, whether for original or voluntary ſin, are carried to extravagance; and thoſe who put an end to their lives by ſuch ſeverities, are termed the ſacred victims of repentance, conſumed by the fire of divine love. Such ſuicides are eſteemed peculiarly meritorious in the eye of Heaven; and it is thought, that their ſufferings cannot fail to appeaſe the anger of the Deity. That celibacy is a ſtate of purity and perfection, is a prevailing notion in many countries: among the Pagans, a married man was forbidden to approach the altar, for ſome days after knowing his wife; and this ridiculous notion of pollution, contributed to introduce celibacy among the Roman Catholic prieſts *. The Emperor Otho, *anno* 1218, became a ſignal penitent: but inſtead of atoning for his ſins by repentance and reſtitution, he laid himſelf down to be trodden under foot by the boys of his kitchen; and frequently ſubmitted to the diſcipline of the whip, inflicted by monks. The Emperor Charles V. toward the end of his days, was ſorely depreſſed in ſpirit with fear of hell. Monks were his only companions, with whom he ſpent his time in chanting hymns. As

* Faſting and celibacy were by Zoroaſter condemned with abhorrence, as a criminal rejection of the beſt gifts of Providence.

As an expiation for his sins, he in private disciplined himself with such severity, that his whip, found after his death, was tinged with his blood. Nor was he satisfied with these acts of mortification: timorous and illiberal solicitude still haunting him, he aimed at something extraordinary, at some new and singular act of piety, to display his zeal, and to merit the favour of heaven. The act he fixed on, was as wild as any that superstition ever suggested to a distempered brain: it was to celebrate his own obsequies. He ordered his tomb to be erected in the chapel of the monastery: his domestics marched there in funeral procession, holding black tapers: he followed in his shroud: he was laid in his coffin with much solemnity: the service of the dead was chanted; and he himself joined in the prayers offered up for his *requiem*, mingling his tears with those of his attendants. The ceremony closed with sprinkling holy water upon the coffin; and the assistants retiring, the doors of the chapel were shut. Then Charles rose out of the coffin, and stole privately to his apartment.

The history of ancient sacrifices is not so accurate, as in every instance to ascertain upon what principle they were founded, whether upon fear, upon gratitude for favours received, or to solicit future favour. Human sacrifices undoubtedly belong to the present head: for being calculated to deprecate the wrath of a malevolent deity, they

could have no other motive but fear; and indeed they are a moſt direful effect of that paſſion *. It is needleſs to loſe time in mentioning inſtances, which are well known to thoſe who are acquainted with ancient hiſtory. A number of them are collected in Hiſtorical Law-tracts †: and to theſe I take the liberty of adding, that the Cimbrians, the Germans, the Gauls, particularly the Druids, practiſed human ſacrifices; for which we have the authority of Julius Cæſar, Strabo, and other authors. A people on the bank of the Miſiſſippi, named *Tenſas*, worſhip the ſun; and, like the Natches their neighbours, have a temple for that luminary, with a ſacred fire in it, continually burning. The temple having been ſet on fire by thunder, was all in flames when ſome French travellers ſaw them throw children into the fire, one after another, to appeaſe the incenſed deity. The Prophet Micah ‡, in a paſſage partly quoted above, inveighs bitterly againſt ſuch ſacrifices: "Wherewith ſhall I come before the Lord, and "bow myſelf before the high God; ſhall I come "before him with burnt-offerings, with calves of "a year old? will the Lord be pleaſed with "thouſands of rams, or with ten thouſands of "rivers

* The Abbé de Boiſſy derives human ſacrifices from the hiſtory of Abraham preparing to ſacrifice his ſon Iſaac, which, ſays he, was imitated by others. A man who is ſo unlucky at gueſſing had better be ſilent.

† Tract 1. ‡ Chap. vi.

" rivers of oil? ſhall I give my firſt-born for my
" tranſgreſſion, the fruit of my body for the ſin
" of my ſoul? He hath ſhewed thee, O man,
" what is good: and what doth the Lord require
" of thee, but to do juſtly, to love mercy, and to
" walk humbly with thy God!"

The ancient Perſians acknowledged Oromazes and Arimanes as their great deities, authors of good and ill to men. But I find not that Arimanes, the evil principle, was ever an object of any religious worſhip. The Gaures, who profeſs the ancient religion of Perſia, addreſs no worſhip but to one God, all-good and all-powerful.

Next, of worſhipping the Deity in the character of a mercenary being. Under that head come ſacrifices and oblations, whether prompted by gratitude for favours received, or by ſelf-intereſt to procure future favours: which, for the reaſon mentioned, I ſhall not attempt to diſtinguiſh. As the deities of early times were thought to reſemble men, it was a natural endeavour in men to conciliate their favour by ſuch offerings as were the moſt reliſhed by themſelves. It is probable, that the firſt ſacrifices of that kind, were of ſweet-ſmelling herbs, which in the fire emitted a flavour that might reach the noſtrils of a deity, even at a diſtance. The burning incenſe to their gods, was practiſed in Mexico and Peru; and at preſent is practiſed in the peninſula of Corea. An opportunity ſo favourable for making religious zeal a

 fund

fund of riches to the priesthood, is seldom neglected. There was no difficulty to persuade ignorant people, that the gods could eat as well as smell: what was offered to a deity for food, being carried into the temple, was understood to be devoured by him.

With respect to the Jewish sacrifices of burnt-offerings, meat-offerings, sin-offerings, peace-offerings, heave-offerings, and wave-offerings, these were appointed by God himself, in order to keep that stiff-necked people in daily remembrance of their dependance on him, and to preserve them if possible from idolatry. But that untractable race did not adhere to the purity of the institution: they insensibly degenerated into the notion that their God was a mercenary being; and in that character only, was the worship of sacrifices performed to him. The offerings mentioned were liberally bestowed on him, not singly as a token of their dependance, but chiefly in order to avert his wrath, or to gain his favour *.

The religious notions of the Greeks were equally impure: they could not think of any means for

* There is no mention in ancient authors of fish being offered to the gods in sacrifice. The reason I take to be, that the most savoury food of man was reckoned the most agreeable to their gods; that savages never thought of fish till land-animals became scarce; and that the matter as well as form of sacrifices were established in practice, long before men had recourse to fish for food.

for conciliating the favour of their gods, more efficacious than gifts. Homer paints his gods as excessively mercenary. In the fourth book of the Iliad, Jupiter says, "Of these cities, honoured the "most by the soul of Jove, is sacred Troy. Ne-"ver stands the altar empty before me, oblations "poured forth in my presence, savour that as-"cends the skies." Speaking in the fifth book of a warrior, known afterward to be Diomedes, "Some god he is, some power against the Tro-"jans enraged for vows unpaid: destructive is "the wrath of the gods." Diomedes prays to Minerva, "With thine arm ward from me the "foe: a year-old heifer, O Queen, shall be thine, "broad-fronted, unbroken, and wild: her to thee "I will offer with prayer, gilding with gold her "horns." Precisely of the same kind, are the offerings made by superstitious Roman Catholics to the Virgin Mary, and to saints. Electra, in the tragedy of that name, supplicates Apollo in the following terms:

> ——— O! hear Electra too,
> Who, with unsparing hand, her choicest gifts
> Hath never fail'd to lay before thy altars;
> Accept the little All that now remains
> For me to give.

The people of Hindostan, as mentioned above, atone for their sins by austere penances; but they

 have

have no notion of presenting gifts to the Deity, nor of deprecating his wrath by the flesh of animals. On the contrary, they reckon it a sin to slay any living creature; which reduces them to vegetable food. This is going too far; for the Deity could never mean to prohibit animal food, when originally man's chief dependance was upon it. The abstaining however from animal food, shows greater humanity in the religion of Hindostan, than of any other known country. The inhabitants of Madagascar are in a stage of religion, common among many nations, which is, the acknowledging one supreme benevolent deity, and many malevolent inferior deities. Most of their worship is indeed addressed to the latter; but they have so far advanced before several other nations, as to offer sacrifices to the supreme Being, without employing either idols or temples.

Philosophy and sound sense in polished nations, have purified religious worship, by banishing the profession, at least, of oblations and sacrifices. The Being that made the world, governs it by laws that are inflexible, because they are the best; and to imagine that he can be moved by prayers, oblations, or sacrifices, to vary his plan of government, is an impious thought, degrading the Deity to a level with ourselves: "Hear O my people, "and I will testify against thee: I am God, even "thy God. I will take no bullock out of thy "house, nor he-goat out of thy fold: for every "beast

" beaſt of the foreſt is mine, and the cattle upon
" a thouſand hills. Will I eat the fleſh of bulls,
" or drink the blood of goats? Offer unto God
" thankſgiving, and pay thy vows to the Moſt
" High. Call upon me in the day of trouble: I
" will deliver thee, and thou ſhalt glorify me *."
" Thou deſireſt not ſacrifice, elſe would I give it;
" thou delighteſt not in burnt-offering. The ſa-
" crifices of God are a broken ſpirit: a broken
" and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not de-
" ſpiſe †." " For I deſired mercy, and not ſacri-
" fice; and the knowledge of God more than
" burnt-offerings ‡." In dark ages, there is a great
ſhew of religion, with little heart-worſhip: in ages
of philoſophy, warm heart-worſhip, with little
ſhew §.

* Pſalm l. † Pſalm li. ‡ Hoſea vi. 6.

§ Agathias urges a different reaſon againſt ſacrifices.—
" Ego nullam naturam eſſe exiſtimo, cui voluptati ſint fœda-
" ta ſanguine altaria, et animantium lanienæ. Quod ſi qua
" tamen eſt cui iſta ſint cordi, non ea mitis et benigna eſt ali-
" qua, ſed fera ac rabida, qualem pavorem poëtæ fingunt, et
" Metum, et Bellonum, et Malam Fortunam, et Diſcordiam,
" quam indomitam appellant."—[*In Engliſh thus:* " I cannot
" conceive, that there ſhould exiſt a ſuperior being, who takes
" delight in the ſacrifice of animals, or in altars ſtained with
" blood. If ſuch there be, his nature is not benevolent, but
" barbarous and cruel. Such indeed were the gods whom
" the poets have created: ſuch were Fear and Terror, the
" goddeſs

This is a proper place for the history of idolatry; which, as will anon appear, sprung from religious worship corrupted by men of shallow understanding and gross conceptions, upon whom things invisible make little impression.

Savages, even of the lowest class, have an impression of invisible powers, though they cannot form any distinct notion of them. But such impression is too faint for the exercise of devotion. Whether inspired

" goddess of War, of Evil Fortune, and of Discord."]—Arnobius batters down bloody sacrifices with a very curious argument. " Ecce si bos aliquis, aut quodlibet ex his animal, quod ad placandas cæditur mitigandasque numinum furias, vocem hominis sumat, eloquaturque his verbis: Ergone, O Jupiter, aut quis alius deus es, humanum est istud et rectum, aut æquitatis alicujus in æstimatione ponendum, ut cùm alius peccaverit, ego occidar, et de meo sanguine fieri tibi patiaris satis, qui nunquam te læserim, nunquam sciens aut nesciens, tuum numen majestatemque violarim, animal, ut scis, mutum, naturæ meæ simplicitatem sequens, nec multiformium morum varietatibus lubricum?"—[*In English thus:* " What if the ox, while he is led out to slaughter to appease the fancied wrath of an offended deity, should assume the human voice, and in these words astonish his conductors; Are these, O merciful God, are these the dictates of humanity, or of justice, that for the crime of another I should forfeit my life. I have never by my will offended thee, and, dumb as I am, and uninformed by reason, my actions, according to the simplicity of my nature, cannot have given thee displeasure, who hast made me as I am."]——If this argument were solid, it would be equally conclusive against animal food.

inspired with love to a good being, or impressed with fear of an ill being, savages are not at ease without some sort of visible object to fix their attention. A great stone served that purpose originally; a very low instrument indeed of religious worship; but not altogether whimsical, if it was introduced, which is highly probable, in the following manner. It was an early and a natural custom among savages, to mark with a great stone, the place where their worthies were interred; of which we have hints every where in ancient history, particularly in the poems of Ossian. "Place "me," says Calmar mortally wounded, "at the "side of a stone of remembrance, that future times "may hear my fame, and the mother of Calmar "rejoice over the stone of my renown." Superstition in later times having deified these worthies, their votaries, rejoicing as formerly over the stones dedicated to them, held these stones to be essential in every act of religious worship performed to their new deities *. Tradition points out many stones in

* Frequent mention is made of such stones in the poems of Ossian. "But remember, my son, to place this sword, this "bow, and this horn, within that dark and narrow house "marked with one gray stone;" p. 55.—"Whose fame is "in that dark-green tomb? Four stones with their heads of "moss stand there, and mark the narrow house of death;" p. 67.—"Let thy bards mourn those who fell. Let Erin "give the sons of Lochlin to earth, and raise the mossy stones "of

in different parts of the world, that were ufed in religious worfhip. The fun was worfhipped at Emefa in Syria by the name of *Elagabalus*, and under the form of a black conical ftone, which, as univerfally believed, had fallen from heaven on that facred place. A large ftone, worfhipped by the Peffenuntians, a people of Phrygia, under the name of *Idæa mater*, was, upon a folemn embaffy to that people, brought to Rome: it being contained in the Sybilline books, that unlefs the Romans got poffeffion of that goddefs, they never would prevail over Hannibal. And Paufanias mentions many ftones in Greece, dedicated to different divinities; particularly thirty fquare ftones in Achaia, on which were engraved the names of as many gods. In another place, he mentions a very ancient ftatue of Venus in the ifland Delos, which, inftead of feet, had only a fquare ftone. This may appear a puzzling circumftance in the hiftory of Greece, confidering that all the Grecian gods were

"of their fame; that the children of the north hereafter "may behold the place where their fathers fought;" p. 78.— "Earth here inclofes the lovelieft pair on the hill: grafs "grows between the ftones of the tomb;" page 208.—In the fame poems we find ftones made inftruments of worfhip. The fpirit of Loda is introduced threatening Fingal. "Fly "to thy land, replied the form; receive the wind and fly. "The blafts are in the hollow of my hand; the courfe of the "ftorm is mine. The King of Sora is my fon; he bends at "the ftone of my power;" p. 200.

were originally mortals, whom it was eaſy to repreſent by ſtatues: but in that early period, the Greeks knew no more of ſtatuary than the moſt barbarous nations. It is perhaps not eaſy to gather the meaning of ſavages, with reſpect to ſuch ſtones: the moſt natural conjecture is, that a great ſtone, dedicated to the worſhip of a certain deity, was conſidered as belonging to him. This notion of property had a double effect: the worſhippers, by connection of ideas, were led from the ſtone to the deity: and the ſtone tended to fix their wandering thoughts. It was probably imagined, over and above, that ſome latent virtue communicated to the ſtone, made it holy or ſacred. Even among enlightened people, a ſort of virtue or ſanctity is conceived to reſide in the place of worſhip: why not alſo in a ſtone dedicated to a deity? The ancient Ethiopians, in their worſhip, introduced the figure of a ſerpent as a ſymbol of the deity: two ſticks laid croſs repreſented Caſtor and Pollux, Roman divinities: a javelin repreſented their god Mars; and in Tartary formerly, the god of war was worſhipped under the ſymbol of an old ruſty ſabre. The ancient Perſians uſed conſecrated fire, as an emblem of the great God. Though the negroes of Congo and Angola have images without number, they are not however idolaters in any proper ſenſe: their belief is, that theſe images are only organs by which the deities ſignify their will to their votaries.

If

If the uſe that was made of ſtones and of other ſymbols in religious worſhip, be fairly repreſented; it may appear ſtrange, that the ingenious Greeks ſunk down into idolatry, at the very time they were making a rapid progreſs in the fine arts. Their improvements in ſtatuary, one of theſe arts, was the cauſe. They began with attempting to carve heads of men and women, repreſenting their deified heroes; which were placed upon the ſtones dedicated to theſe heroes. In the progreſs of the art, ſtatues were executed complete in every member; and at laſt, ſtatues of the gods were made, expreſſing ſuch dignity and majeſty, as inſenſibly to draw from beholders a degree of devotion to the ſtatues themſelves. Hear Quinctilian upon that ſubject. "At quæ Polycleto defuerunt, Phidiæ "atque Alcameni dantur. Phidias tamen diis "quàm hominibus efficiendis melior artifex tra-"ditur: in ebore vero, longè citra æmulum, vel "ſi nihil niſi Minervam Athenis aut Olympium "in Elide Jovem feciſſet, cujus pulchritudo adje-"ciſſe aliquid etiam receptæ religioni videtur; "adeo majeſtas operis deum æquavit *." Here is

* "The deficiencies of Polycletus were made up in Phidias "and Alcamenes. Phidias is reckoned to have had more "ſkill in forming the ſtatues of gods than of men. In works "of ivory he was unrivalled, although there had been no "other proofs of his excellence than the ſtatue of Minerva at "Athens, and the Jupiter Olympius in Ellis. Of the latter, "ſo

is laid a foundation for idolatry: let us trace its progress. Such statues as are represented by Quinctilian, serve greatly to inflame devotion; and during a warm fit of the religious passion, the representation is lost, and the statue becomes a deity; precisely as where King Lear is represented by Garrick: the actor vanishes; and, behold! the King himself. This is not singular. Anger occasions a metamorphosis still more extraordinary: if I happen to strike my gouty toe against a stone, the violence of the pain converts the stone for a moment into a voluntary agent; and I wreak my resentment on it, as if it really were so. It is true, the image is only conceived to be a deity during the fervour of devotion; and when that subsides, the image falls back to its original representative state. But frequent instances of that kind, have at last the effect among illiterate people, to convert the image into a sort of permanent deity: what such people see, makes a deep impression; what they see not, very little. There is another thing that concurs with eye-sight, to promote this delusion: devotion, being a vigorous principle in the human breast, will exert itself upon the meanest object, when none more noble is in view.

The ancient Persians held the consecrated fire to be an emblem only of the great God: but such veneration

" so transcendent was the beauty, that it heightened every
" sentiment of the received religion; the majesty of the image
" appearing to rival that of the god himself."

veneration was paid to that emblem, and with ſo great ceremony was it treated, that the vulgar came at laſt to worſhip it as a ſort of deity. The prieſts of the Gaures watch the conſecrated fire day and night: they keep it alive with the pureſt wood, without bark: they touch it not with ſword nor knife: they blow it not with bellows, nor with the mouth: even the prieſt is prohibited to approach it, till his mouth be covered with fine linen, leſt it be polluted with his breath: if it happen to go out, it muſt be rekindled by ſtriking fire from flint, or by a burning glaſs.

The progreſs of idolatry will more clearly appear, from attending to the religion of the Greeks and Romans. The Greeks, as mentioned above, made uſe of ſtones in divine worſhip, long before idolatry was introduced: and we learn from Varro, that for a hundred and ſeventy years after Numa, the Romans had no ſtatues nor images in their temples. After ſtatues of the gods became faſhionable, they acquired by degrees more and more reſpect. The Greek and Roman writers talk of divine virtue being communicated to ſtatues; and ſome Roman writers talk familiarly, of the *numen* of a deity reſiding in his ſtatue. Arnobius, in his book againſt the Gentiles, introduces a Gentile delivering the following opinion. "We do not believe, that the metal which compoſes a ſtatue, "whether gold, or ſilver, or braſs, is a god. But "we believe, that a ſolemn dedication brings down "the

" the god to inhabit his image; and it is the god " only that we worſhip in that image." This explains the Roman ceremony, of inviting to their ſide the tutelar deities of towns beſieged by them, termed *evocatio tutelarium deorum*. The Romans, cruel as they were, overflowed with ſuperſtition; and as they were averſe from combating the tutelar deities even of their enemies, they endeavoured to gain theſe deities by large promiſes, and aſſurance of honourable treatment. As they could not hope that a ſtatue would change its place, their notion muſt have been, that by this ceremony, the tutelary deity might be prevailed upon to withdraw its *numen*, and leave the ſtatue a dead lump of matter. When Stilpo was baniſhed by the Areopagus of Athens, for affirming, that the ſtatue in the temple of Minerva, was not the goddeſs, but a piece of matter carved by Phidias; he ſurely was not condemned for ſaying, that the ſtatue was made by Phidias, a fact univerſally known: his hereſy conſiſted in denying that the *numen* of Minerva reſided in the ſtatue. Auguſtus, having twice loſt his fleet by ſtorm, forbade Neptune to be carried in proceſſion along with the other gods; imagining he had avenged himſelf of Neptune, by neglecting the favourite ſtatue in which his *numen* reſided.

When ſaints in the Chriſtian church were deified, even their images became objects of worſhip; from a fond imagination, that ſuch worſhip draws

draws down into the images the ſouls of the ſaints they repreſent; which is the ſame belief that Arnobius, in the paſſage above mentioned, aſcribes to the Gentiles; and is not widely different from the belief of the Pagan Tartars and Oſtiacs, by and by to be mentioned. In the eleventh century, there was a violent diſpute about images in the Greek church; many aſſerting, that in the images of our Saviour and of the ſaints, there reſides an inherent ſanctity which is a proper object of worſhip; and that Chriſtians ought not to confine their worſhip to the perſons repreſented, but ought alſo to extend it to their images.

As ignorant and ſavage nations can form no conception of Deity but of a being like a man, only ſuperior in power and greatneſs; many images have been made of the Deity conformable to that conception. It is eaſy to make ſome reſemblance of a man; but how is power and greatneſs to be repreſented? To perform this with ſucceſs, would require a Phidias. Savages go more bluntly to work: they endeavour to repreſent a man with many heads, and with a ſtill greater number of hands. The northern Tartars ſeem to have no deities but certain ſtatues or images coarſely formed out of wood, and bearing ſome diſtant reſemblance to the human figure. To palliate ſo groſs an abſurdity as that a god can be fabricated by the hands of man, they imagine this image to be endued with a ſoul: to ſay whence that ſoul came

would

would puzzle the wiſeſt of them. That ſoul is conceived to be too elevated for dwelling conſtantly in a piece of matter: they believe that it reſides in ſome more honourable place; and that it only viſits the image or idol, when it is called down by prayers and ſupplications. They ſacrifice to this idol, by rubbing its mouth with the fat of fiſh, and by offering it the warm blood of ſome beaſt killed in hunting. The laſt ſtep of the ceremony is, to honour the ſoul of the idol with a joyful ſhout, as a ſort of convoy to it when it returns home. The Oſtiacs have a wooden idol, termed *The Old Man of Oby*, who is guardian of their fiſhery: it hath eyes of glaſs, and a head with ſhort horns. When the ice diſſolves, they crowd to this idol, requeſting that he will be propitious to their fiſhery. If unſucceſsful, he is loaded with reproaches: if ſucceſsful, he is entitled to a ſhare of the capture. They make a feaſt for him, rubbing his ſnout with choice fat; and when the entertainment is over, they accompany the ſoul of the idol a little way, beating the air with their cudgels. The Oſtiacs have another idol, that is fed with milk ſo abundantly, as to come out on both ſides of the ſpoon, and to fall down upon the veſture; which however is never waſhed, ſo little is cleanneſs thought eſſential to religion by that people. It is indeed ſtrangely abſurd, to think, that inviſible ſouls require food like human crea-

tures; and yet the ſame abſurdity prevailed in Greece.

The ancient Germans, a ſober and ſenſible people, had no notion of repreſenting their gods by ſtatues, or of building temples to them. They worſhipped in conſecrated groves *. The Egyptians, from a juſt conception that an inviſible being can have no reſemblance to one that is viſible, employed hieroglyphical figures for denoting metaphorically the attributes of their gods; and they employed, not only the figures of birds and beaſts, but of vegetables; leeks, for example, and onions. This metaphorical adjunct to religion, innocent in itſelf, ſunk the Egyptians into the moſt groveling idolatry. As hieroglyphical figures, compoſed frequently of heterogeneous parts, reſemble not any being human or divine; the vulgar, loſing ſight of the emblematic ſignification underſtood by poets and philoſophers only, took up with the plain figures as real divinities. How otherwiſe can it be accounted for, that the ox, the ape, the onion, were in Egypt worſhipped as deities? Plutarch, it is true, in his chapter upon Iſis and Oſiris obſerves, that the Egyptians worſhipped the bull, the cat, and other animals, not as divinities, but as repreſentatives of them, like an image ſeen in a glaſs; or, as he expreſſes it in another part of the ſame chapter, "juſt as we ſee the reſemblance of the "ſun in a drop of water." But that this muſt be underſtood

* Tacitus, De moribus Germanorum, cap. 9.

underſtood of Philoſophers only, will be probable from what is reported by Diodorus Siculus, that in a great famine, the Egyptians ventured not to touch the ſacred animals, though they were forced to devour one another. A ſnake of a particular kind, about a yard long, and about the thickneſs of a man's arm, is worſhipped by the Whidans in Guinea. It has a large round head, piercing eyes, a ſhort pointed tongue, and a ſmooth ſkin, beautifully ſpeckled. It has a ſtrong antipathy to all the venomous kind; in other reſpects, innocent and tame. To kill theſe ſnakes being a capital crime, they travel about unmoleſted, even into bed-chambers. They occaſioned, anno 1697, a ridiculous perſecution. A hog, teaſed by one of them, tore it with his tuſks till it died. The prieſts carried their complaint to the king; and no one preſuming to appear as counſel for the hogs, orders were iſſued for ſlaughtering the whole race. At once were brandiſhed a thouſand cutlaſſes; and the race would have been extirpated, had not the king interpoſed, repreſenting to the prieſts, that they ought to reſt ſatisfied with the innocent blood they had ſpilt. Rancour and cruelty never rage more violently, than under the maſk of religion.

It is amazing how prone even the moſt poliſhed nations were to idolatry. A ſtatue of Hercules was worſhipped at Tyre, not as a repreſentative of the deity, but as the deity himſelf. And accordingly, when Tyre was beſieged by Alexander, the

deity was faſt bound in chains, to prevent him from deſerting to the enemy. The city of Ambracia being taken by the Romans, and every ſtatue of their gods being carried to Rome; the Ambracians complained bitterly, that not a ſingle divinity was left them to worſhip. How much more rational are the Hindoſtan Bramins, who teach their diſciples, that idols are emblems only of the Deity, intended merely to fix the attention of the populace!

The firſt ſtatues in Greece and Tuſcany were made with wings, to ſignify the ſwift motion of the gods. Theſe ſtatues were ſo clumſy, as ſcarce to reſemble human creatures, not to talk of a divinity. But the admirable ſtatues executed in later times, were imagined to reſemble moſt accurately the deities repreſented by them; whence the vulgar notion, that gods have wings, and that angels have wings.

I proceed to what in the hiſtory of idolatry may be reckoned the ſecond part. Statues, we have ſeen, were at firſt uſed as repreſentatives only of the Deity; but came afterward to be metamorphoſed into Deities. The abſurdity did not ſtop there. People, not ſatisfied with the viſible deities erected in temples for public worſhip, became fond to have private deities of their own, whom they worſhipped as their own tutelar deities; and this practice ſpread ſo wide, that among many nations every family had houſehold gods cut in wood or ſtone.

ſtone. Every family in Kamſkatka has a tutelar deity in the ſhape of a pillar, with the head of a man, which is ſuppoſed to guard the houſe againſt malevolent ſpirits. They give it food daily, and anoint the head with the fat of fiſh. The Prophet Iſaiah* puts this ſpecies of deification in a moſt ridiculous light: "He burneth part thereof "in the fire: with part thereof he roaſteth fleſh: "of the reſidue he maketh a god, even his graven "image; he falleth down, worſhipping, and pray- "ing to it, and ſaith, Deliver me, for thou art my "god." Multiplication could not fail to ſink houſehold-gods into a degree of contempt: ſome ſlight hope of good from them, might produce ſome cold ceremonial worſhip; but there could be no real devotion at heart. The Chineſe manner of treating their houſehold-gods, will vouch for me. When a Chineſe does not obtain what he prays for, "Thou ſpiritual dog," he will ſay, "I "lodge thee well, thou art beautifully gilded, "treated with perfumes and burnt-offerings; and "yet thou withholdeſt from me the neceſſaries of "life." Sometimes they faſten a cord to the idol, and drag it through the dirt. The inhabitants of Ceylon treat their idols in the ſame manner. Thor, Woden, and Friga, were the great deities of the Scandinavians. They had at the ſame time inferior deities, who were ſuppoſed to have been men tranſlated into heaven for their good works. Theſe

* Chap. xliv.

they treated with very little ceremony, refusing to worship them if they were not propitious; and even punishing them with banishment; but restoring them after a time, in hopes of amendment. Domestic idols are treated by the Ostiacs with no greater reverence than by the people mentioned. But they have public idols, some particularly of brass, which are highly reverenced: the solidity of the metal is, in their imagination, connected with immortality; and great regard is paid to these idols, for the knowledge and experience they must have acquired in an endless course of time.

When by philosophy and improvement of the rational faculty, the Pagan religion in Rome was sinking into contempt, little regard was had to tutelar deities, to auguries, or to prophecies. Ptolemy, King of Egypt, being thrust out of his kingdom by a powerful faction, applied to the Senate of Rome to be restored. Lentulus, proconsul of Syria, was ambitious to be employed; but he had enemies who made violent opposition. They brought religion into the quarrel, alleging a Sybilline oracle, prophesying that Ptolemy should be restored, but not by an army. Cicero, in a letter still extant, gave Lentulus the following advice, that with his Syrian army he should invade Egypt, beat down all opposition, and when the country was quieted, that Ptolemy should be at hand to take possession. And this the great Cicero thought

might

might be piously done without contradicting the oracle.

Saints, or tutelar deities, are sometimes not better treated among Roman Catholics, than among Pagans. "When we were in Portugal," says Captain Brydone, "the people of Castelbranco were "so enraged at St Antonio, for suffering the Spa-"niards to plunder their town, contrary, as they "affirmed, to his express agreement with them, "that they broke many of his statues to pieces; "and one that had been more revered than the "rest, they took the head off, and in its stead pla-"ced one of St Francis. The great St Januarius "himself was in imminent danger, during the last "famine at Naples. They loaded him with abuse "and invective; and declared point-blank, that "if he did not procure them corn by such a time, "he should be no longer their saint." The Tutelar saint of Cattania, at the foot of Mount Etna, is St Agatha. A torrent of lava burst over the walls, and laid waste great part of that beautiful city. Where was St Agatha at that time? The people say, that they had given her just provocation; but that she has long ago been reconciled to them, and has promised never to suffer the lava to hurt them again. At the foot of Mount Etna, a statue of a saint is placed as a memorial for having prevented the lava from running up the mountain of Taurominum, and destroying that town; the

ſaint having conducted the lava down a low valley to the ſea.

Let a traveller once deviate from the right road, and there is no end of wandering. Porphyrius reports, that in Anubis, an Egyptian city, a real man was worſhipped as a god; which is alſo aſſerted by Minutius Fælix, in his apology for the Chriſtians. A thouſand writers have ſaid, that the Tartars believe their high-prieſt, termed *Dalai Lama*, to be immortal. But this is a miſtake: his death is publiſhed through the whole country; and couriers intimate it even to the Emperor of China: his effigy is taken down from the portal of the great church, and that of his ſucceſſor is put in its ſtead. The ſyſtem of the metempſychoſis, adopted in that country, has occaſioned the miſtake.—They believe, that the holy ſpirit, which animates a Dalai Lama, paſſes upon his death into the body of his ſucceſſor. The ſpirit, therefore, is believed to be immortal, not the body. The Dalai Lama, however, is the object of profound veneration. The Tartar Princes are daily ſending preſents to him, and conſulting him as an oracle: they even undertake a pilgrimage in order to worſhip him in perſon. In a retired part of the temple, he is ſhown covered with precious ſtones, and ſitting croſs-legged. They proſtrate themſelves before him at a diſtance, for they are not permitted to kiſs his toe. The prieſts make traffic even of his excrements, which are greedily purchaſed at a high price,

price, and are kept in a golden box hanging from the neck, as a charm against every misfortune. Like the cross of Jesus, or the Virgin's milk, we may believe, there never will be wanting plenty of that precious stuff to answer all demands: the priests, out of charity, will furnish a quota, rather than suffer votaries to depart with their money for want of goods to purchase. The person of the Japan Pope, or Ecclesiastical Emperor, is held so sacred, as to make the cutting his beard or his nails, a deadly sin. But absurd laws are never steadily executed. The beard and the nails are cut in the night-time, when the Pope is supposed to be asleep; and what is taken away by that operation, is understood to be stolen from him, which is no impeachment upon his Holiness.

That the Jews were idolaters when they sojourned in the land of Goshen, were it not presumable from their commerce with the Egyptians, would, however, be evident from the history of Moses. Notwithstanding their miraculous deliverance from the Egyptian king, notwithstanding the daily miracles wrought among them in the wilderness; so addicted were they to a visible deity, that during even the momentary absence of Moses conversing with God on the mount, they fabricated a golden calf, and worshipped it as their god. "And "the Lord said unto Moses, Go, get thee down: "for thy people which thou broughtest out of the "land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: they "have

" have turned aside quickly out of the way
" which I commanded them: they have made
" them a molten calf, have worshipped it, have sa-
" crificed thereunto, and said, "These be thy
" gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out
" of the land of Egypt *." The history of the Jews, shews how difficult it is to reclaim from idolatry a brutish nation, addicted to superstition, and fettered by inveterate habit. What profusion of blood, to bring that obstinate and perverse people to the true religion! all in vain. The book of Judges, in particular, is full of reiterated relapses, from their own invisible God, to the visible gods of other nations. And in all probability, their anxious desire for a visible king, related in the first book of Samuel, arose from their being deprived of a visible god. There was a necessity for prohibiting images †; which would have soon been converted into deities visible: and it was extremely prudent, to supply the want of a visible god, with endless shews and ceremonies; which accordingly became the capital branch of the Jewish worship.

It appears to me from the whole history of the Jews, that a gross people are not susceptible but of a gross religion; and without an enlightened understanding, that it is vain to think of eradicating superstition and idolatry. And after all the covenants made with the Jews, after all the chastisements

* Exod. xxxii. 7. † Deut. xvi. 22.

tisements and all the miracles lavished on them, that they were not however reclaimed from the most groveling idolatry, is evident from the two golden calves fabricated by Jeroboam, saying, "Behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee "up out of the land of Egypt *." The people also of Judah fell back to idol-worship under Rehoboam, son of Solomon †. Jehu, king of the ten tribes, did not tolerate the worship of other gods ‡; but he continued to worship the two golden calves fabricated by Jeroboam §. Down to the days of King Hezekiah, the Jews worshipped the brazen serpent erected by Moses in the wilderness. The Jews seem indeed to have been a very perverse people: the many promises and threatenings announced by their prophets, and the many miracles wrought among them, had no permanent effect to restrain them from idolatry; and yet, during their captivity in Babylon, several of them submitted to be burnt alive, rather than to join in idol-worship ||. Captivity cured them radically of idolatry; and from that period to this day, they have not been guilty of a single relapse. Xiphilin, in his abridgment of Dion Cassius, relating their war with Pompey many centuries after the Babylonish captivity, gives the following account of them. "Their "customs are quite different from those of o-"ther

* 1 Kings, xii. 28.

† 1 Kings, xiv. 23.

‡ 2 Kings, x. 25.

§ 2 Kings, x. 29.

|| Daniel, chap. iii.

"ther nations. Besides a peculiar manner of li-
"ving, they acknowledge none of the common
"deities: they acknowledge but one, whom they
"worship with great veneration. There never
"was an image in Jerusalem; because they be-
"lieve their God to be invisible and ineffable.
"They have built him a temple of great size and
"beauty, remarkable in the following particular,
"that it is open above, without any roof."

There lies no solid objection against images among an enlightened people, when used merely to rouse devotion; but as images tend to pervert the vulgar, they ought not to be admitted into churches. Pictures are less liable to be misapprehended; and the Ethiopians accordingly indulge pictures in their churches, though they prohibit statues. The general council of Frankfort permitted the use of images in churches; but strictly prohibited any worship to be addressed to them. So prone, however, to idolatry are the low and illiterate, that the prohibition lost ground both in France and in Germany; and idol-worship became again general.

It is probable, that the sun and moon were early held to be deities, and that they were the first visible objects of worship. Of all the different kinds of idolatry, it is indeed the most excusable. Upon the sun depends health, vigour, and cheerfulness: during his retirement, all is dark and dismal; when he performs his majestic round, to bless his subjects

and

and to beſtow fecundity, can a mere ſavage with-hold gratitude and veneration! Hear an old Pagan bard upon that ſubject. "O thou who rolleſt "above, round as the ſhield of my fathers! Whence "are thy beams, O ſun, thy everlaſting light? "Thou comeſt forth in thy awful beauty, and the "ſtars hide their face: thou moveſt alone, for who "can be a companion of thy courſe! The oaks of "the mountain fall: the mountains decay with "years: the ocean ſhrinks and grows again: the "moon herſelf is loſt in heaven: but thou art "for ever the ſame, rejoycing in the brightneſs of "thy courſe. When tempeſts darken the world, "when thunder rolls, and lightning flies, thou "lookeſt in thy beauty from the clouds, and "laugheſt at the ſtorm *." Worſhip to the ſun as a real deity, was in former times univerſal; and prevails in many countries even at preſent. The American ſavages worſhip the ſun as ſovereign of the univerſe, known by the name of *Ariſkoui* among the Hurons, and of *Agriſkoué* among the Iroquois. They offer him tobacco, which they term *ſmoking the ſun*: the chief man in the aſſembly lights the calumet, and offers it thrice to the riſing ſun; imploring his protection, and recommending the tribe to his care. The chief proceeds to ſmoke; and every one ſmokes in his turn. This ceremony is performed on important occaſions only: leſs matters are reſerved for their Manitou. The

* Oſſian.

The Miſiſſippi people offer to the ſun the firſt of what they take in hunting; which their commander artfully converts to his own uſe. The Apalachites, bordering on Florida, worſhip the ſun; but ſacrifice nothing to him that has life; they hold him to be the parent of life, and think that he can take no pleaſure in the deſtruction of any living creature: their devotion is exerted in perfumes and ſongs. The Mexicans, while a free people, preſented to the ſun a ſhare of their meat and drink. The inhabitants of Darien believe in the ſun as their god, and in the moon as his wife; paying them equal adoration. The people of Borneo worſhip the ſun and moon as real divinities. The Samoides worſhip both, bowing to them morning and evening in the Perſian manner.

But if the ſun and moon were the firſt objects of idolatry, knowledge and reflection reformed many from the error of holding theſe luminaries to be deities. "That original Intelligence," ſay the Magians, "who is the firſt principle of "all things, diſcovers himſelf to the mind and "underſtanding only: but he hath placed the "ſun as his image in the viſible univerſe; and "the beams of that bright luminary, are but a "faint copy of the glory that ſhines in the higher "heavens." The Perſians, as Herodotus reports, had neither temples, nor altars, nor images: for, ſays that author, they do not think, like the Greeks, that there is any reſemblance between gods and

men.

men. The Gaures, who to this day profefs the ancient religion of Perfia, celebrate divine worfhip before the facred fire, and turn with peculiar veneration toward the rifing fun, as the reprefentative of God; but they adore neither the fun, nor the facred fire. They are profeffed enemies to every image of the Deity cut with hands: and hence the havock made by the ancient Perfians, upon the ftatues and temples of the Grecian goods. Such fublimity of thought was above the reach of other uninfpired nations, excepting only the Hindoos and Chinefe.

I clofe the hiftory of idolatry with a brief recapitulation of the outlines. Admitting the fun and moon to have been the firft objects of idolatry, yet as Polytheifm was once univerfal, they make only two of the many gods that were every where worfhipped. We have feen, that the facred fire was employed in the worfhip of the fun, and that images were employed in the worfhip of other deities. Images were originally ufed for the fole purpofe of animating devotion: fuch was their ufe in Perfia and Hindoftan; and fuch was their ufe in every country among philofophers. The Emperor Julian, in an epiftle to Theodore concerning the images of the gods, fays, "We "believe not that thefe images are gods: we "only ufe them in worfhipping the gods." In the progrefs toward idolatry, the next ftep is, to imagine, that a deity loves his image, that he

makes

makes it his reſidence, or at leaſt communicates ſome virtue to it. The laſt ſtep is, to fancy the image itſelf to be a deity; which gained ground imperceptibly as ſtatuary advanced toward perfection. It would be incredible that men of ſenſe ſhould ever ſuffer themſelves to be impreſſed with ſo wild a deluſion, were it not the overbearing influence of religious ſuperſtition. *Credo quia impoſſibile eſt*, is applicable to idolatry as well as to tranſubſtantiation. The worſhipping of the ſun and moon as deities, is idolatry in the ſtricteſt ſenſe. With reſpect to images, the firſt ſtep of the progreſs is not idolatry: the next is mixed idolatry: and the laſt is rank idolatry.

So much upon idolatry. I proceed to what approaches the neareſt to it, which is worſhip addreſſed to deified mortals. The ancient gods were exalted ſo little above men, that it was no hard taſk for the imagination to place in heaven, men who had made a figure on earth. The Grecian heaven was entirely peopled with ſuch men, as well as that of many other nations. Men are deified every day by the Romiſh church, under the denomination of ſaints; perſons are frequently ſelected for that honour who ſcarce deſerved a place on earth, and ſome who never had a place there. The Roman Catholics copy the pagans, in worſhipping theſe ſaints in quality of tutelar deities. One branch of the office beſtowed on them, is to explain the wants of their votaries to the King of heaven,

heaven, and to ſupplicate for them. The mediatorial office prevails with reſpect to earthly potentates, as well as heavenly: being ſtruck with awe and timidity in approaching thoſe exalted above us, we naturally take hold of ſome intermediate perſon to ſolicit with us. In approaching the Almighty, the mind ſinking down into humility and profound veneration, ſtops ſhort, relying upon ſome friend in heaven to intercede in its behalf. Temples among the Cochin-Chineſe are conſtructed with a deep and dark niche, which is their *ſanctum ſanctorum*. They hold, that no repreſentation, whether by painting or ſculpture, can be made of God, who is inviſible. The niche denotes his incomprehenſibility; and the good men placed by them in heaven, are believed to be their interceſſors at the throne of grace. The prayers of the Chinguleſe are ſeldom directed to the Supreme Being, but to his vicegerents. Interceſſors, at the ſame time, contribute to the eaſe of their votaries: A Roman Catholic need not aſſume a very high tone, in addreſſing a tutelar ſaint choſen by himſelf.

Falſe notions of Providence have prompted groveling mortals to put confidence in mediators and interceſſors of a ſtill lower claſs, namely, living mortals, who by idle auſterities have acquired a reputation for holineſs. Take the following inſtance, the ſtrongeſt of the kind that can be figured. Louis XI. of France, ſenſible of the approach of death, ſent for a hermit of Calabria, named *Franciſco Marta-*

rillo; and throwing himself at the hermit's feet in a flood of tears, entreated him to intercede with God, that his life might be prolonged; as if the voice of a Calabrian friar, says Voltaire, could alter the course of Providence, by preserving a weak and perverse soul in a worn-out body.

Having discussed the persons that are the objects of worship, the next step in order is, to take under view the forms and ceremonies employed in religious worship. Forms and ceremonies illustrate a prince in his own court: they are necessary in a court of law for expediting business; and they promote seriousness and solemnity in religious worship. At the same time, in every one of these a just medium ought to be preserved between too many and too few. With respect to religious worship in particular, superfluity of ceremonies quenches devotion, by occupying the mind too much upon externals. The Roman Catholic worship is crowded with ceremonies; it resembles the Italian opera, which is all sound and no sentiment. The presbyterian form of worship is too naked: it is proper for philosophers more than for the populace. This is fundamentally the cause of the numerous secessions from the church of Scotland that have made a figure of late: people dislike the established forms, when they find less animation in public worship than is desired; and without being sensible of the real cause, they chuse pastors for themselves, who supply the want of ceremonies by loud

speaking,

ſpeaking, with much external fervor and devotion *.

* External ſhow figures greatly in dark times, when nothing makes an impreſſion but what is viſible. A German traveller (Hentzner) talking of Queen Elizabeth, thus deſcribes the ſolemnity of her dinner ; "While ſhe was "at prayers, we ſaw her table ſet out in the following ſo-"lemn manner. A gentleman entered the room bearing "a rod, and along with him another who had a table-"cloth, which, after they had both kneeled three times "with the utmoſt veneration, he ſpread upon the table, "and after kneeling again, they both retired. Then came "two others, one with the rod again, the other with a "ſalt-cellar, a plate and bread; when they had kneeled, "as the others had done, and placed what was brought "upon the table, they too retired with the ſame ceremo-"nies performed by the firſt. At laſt came an unmarried "lady, (we were told ſhe was a Counteſs), and along with "her a married one, bearing a taſting knife; the former "was dreſſed in white ſilk; who when ſhe had proſtrated "herſelf three times, in the moſt graceful manner, ap-"proached the table, and rubbed the plates with bread "and ſalt, with as much awe as if the Queen had been "preſent: when they had waited there a little while, the "yeomen of the guard entered, bareheaded, clothed in "ſcarlet, with a golden roſe upon their backs, bringing "in at each turn a courſe of twenty-four diſhes, ſerved in "plate moſt of it gilt; theſe diſhes were received by a "gentleman in the ſame order they were brought, and "placed upon the table, while the lady-taſter gave to "each of the guard a mouthful to eat, of the particular

The frequent ablutions or washings among the Mahometans and others, as acts of devotion, show the influence that the slightest resemblances have on the ignorant. Because purification, in several languages, is a term applicable to the mind as well as

" dish he had brought, for fear of any poison. During " the time that this guard, which consists of the tallest " and stoutest men that can be found in all England, were " bringing dinner, twelve trumpets and two kettle-drums " made the hall ring for half an hour together. At the " end of this ceremonial, a number of unmarried ladies " appeared, who, with particular solemnity, lifted the " meat off the table, and conveyed it into the Queen's " inner and more private chamber, where, after she had " chosen for herself, the rest goes to the ladies of the " court." Forms were greatly regarded among the old Romans, dresses appropriated to different ranks; lictors, axes, bundles of rods, and other ensigns of power; military merit rewarded with triumphs, ovations, crowns of gold, of leaves, &c. &c. Such appearances strike the multitude with respect and awe: they are indeed despised by men of plain sense; but they regain their credit with philosophers. Excessive courage, the exertion of which is visible, was the heroism of the last age: "I shall never " esteem a king," said the great Gustavus Adolphus, " who in battle does not expose himself like a private " man." By acuteness of judgment and refinement of taste, we cling to the substance and disregard forms and ceremonies. External show, however, continues to prevail in many instances. A young man is apt to be captivated with beauty or dress; a young woman, with equipage or a title. And hence, many an ill-sorted match.

as to the body, ſhallow thinkers, miſled by the double meaning, imagine that the mind, like the body, is purified by water.

The ſect of Ali uſe the Alcoran tranſlated into the Perſian language, which is their native tongue. The ſect of Omar eſteem this to be a groſs impiety; being perſuaded, that the Alcoran was written in Arabic, by the Angel Gabriel, at the command of God himſelf. The Roman Catholics are not then the only people who profeſs to ſpeak nonſenſe to God Almighty; or, which is the ſame, who profeſs to pray in an unknown tongue.

At meals, the ancients poured out ſome wine, as a libation to the gods: Chriſtians pronounce a ſhort prayer, termed a *grace*.

The groſs notion of Deity entertained by the ancients, is exemplified in their worſhipping and ſacrificing on high places; in order, as they thought, to be more within ſight. Jupiter, in Homer, praiſes Hector for ſacrificing to him frequently upon the top of Ida; and Strabo obſerves, that the Perſians, who uſed neither images nor altars, ſacrificed to the gods in high places. Balak carried Balaam the prophet to the top of Piſgah and other mountains, to ſacrifice there, and to curſe Iſrael. The votaries of Baal always worſhipped in high places. Even the ſage Tacitus was infected with that abſurdity. Speaking of certain high mountains where the gods were worſhipped, he expreſſes himſelf thus: *Maxime cœlo*

 appropinquare,

appropinquare, precesque mortalium a Deo nusquam propiùs audiri *.

Ceremonies that tend to unhinge morality, belong more properly to the following section, treating of the connection between religion and morality.

It is now full time to take under consideration an objection to the sense of Deity hinted above, arguing from the gross conceptions of deity among many nations, that this sense cannot be innate. The objection is not indeed directly stated in the following passage, borrowed from a justly-celebrated author; but as it perhaps may be implied, the passage shall be fairly transcribed. "The universal propensity to believe invisible intelligent "power, being a general attendant on human nature, if not an original instinct, may be considered as a kind of stamp which the Deity has "set upon his work; and nothing surely can more "dignify mankind, than to be the only earthly "being who bears the stamp or image of the universal Creator. But consult this image as it "commonly is in popular religions: How is the "Deity disfigured! what caprice, absurdity, and "immorality, are attributed to him †!" A satisfactory answer to the objection implied in this passage,

* "As approaching nearer to heaven, the prayers of "mortals are there more distinctly heard."

† Natural History of Religion.

passage, will occur, upon recollecting the progress of men and nations from infancy to maturity. Our external senses, necessary for self-preservation, soon arrive at perfection: the more refined senses of propriety, of right and wrong, of Deity, of being accountable creatures, and many others of the same kind, are of slower growth: the sense of right and wrong in particular, and the sense of Deity, seldom reach perfection but by good education and much study. If such be the case among enlightened nations, what is to be expected from savages who are in the lowest stage of understanding? To a savage of New Holland, whose sense of deity is extremely obscure, one may talk without end of a being who created the world, and who governs it by wise laws; but in vain, for the savage will be never the wiser. The same savage hath also a glimmering of the moral sense, as all men have; and yet in vain will you discourse to him of approbation and disapprobation, of merit and demerit: of these terms he has no clear conception. Hence the endless aberrations of rude and barbarous nations, from pure religion as well as from pure morality. Of the latter, there are many instances collected in the preceding tract; and of the former, still more in the present tract. The sense of deity in dark times has indeed been strangely distorted, by certain biasses and passions that enslave the rude and illiterate: but these yield gradually to the rational faculty as it ripens, and

at laſt leave religion free to ſound philoſophy. Then it is, that men, liſtening to the innate ſenſe of deity purified from every bias, acquire a clear conviction of one ſupreme Deity who made and governs the world.

The foregoing objection then weighs not againſt the ſenſe of deity more than againſt the moral ſenſe. If it have weight, it reſolves into a complaint againſt Providence for the weakneſs of the ſenſe of deity in rude and illiterate nations. If ſuch complaint be ſolidly founded, it pierces extremely deep: why have not all nations, even in their naſcent ſtate, the ſenſe of deity and the moral ſenſe in purity and perfection? why do they not poſſeſs all the arts of life without neceſſity of culture or experience? why are we born poor and helpleſs infants, inſtead of being produced complete in every member, internal and external, as Adam and Eve were? The plan of Providence is far above the reach of our weak criticiſms: it is but a ſmall portion that is laid open to our view; can we pretend to judge of the whole? I venture only to ſuggeſt, that as, with reſpect to individuals, there is a progreſs from infancy to maturity; ſo there is a ſimilar progreſs in every nation, from its ſavage ſtate to its maturity in arts and ſciences. A child that has juſt conceptions of the Deity and of his attributes, would be a great miracle; and would not ſuch knowledge in a ſavage be equally ſo? Nor can I diſcover what benefit a child or a

ſavage

ſavage could reap from ſuch knowledge; provided it remained a child or a ſavage in every other reſpect. The genuine fruits of religion, are gratitude to the Author of our being, veneration to him as the Supreme Being, abſolute reſignation to the eſtabliſhed laws of his providence, and cheerful performance of every duty: but a child has not the ſlighteſt idea of gratitude nor of veneration, and very little of moral duties; and a ſavage, with reſpect to theſe, is not much ſuperior to a child. The formation and government of the world, as far as we know, are excellent: we have great reaſon to preſume the ſame with reſpect to what we do not know; and every good man will reſt ſatisfied with the following reflection, That we ſhould have been men from the hour of our birth, complete in every part, had it been conformable to the ſyſtem of unerring Providence.

SECT. II.

Morality conſidered as a branch of duty to our Maker.

HAVING travelled long on a rough road, not a little fatiguing, the agreeable part lies before us; which is, to treat of morality as a branch of religion. It was that ſubject which induced me to undertake the hiſtory of natural religion; a ſubject that will afford ſalutary inſtruction; and will

will inſpire true piety, if inſtruction can produce that effect.

Bayle ſtates a queſtion, Whether a people may not be happy in ſociety, and be qualified for good government, upon principles of morality ſingly, without any ſenſe of religion. The queſtion is ingenious, and may give opportunity for ſubtle reaſoning; but it is uſeleſs, becauſe the fact ſuppoſed cannot happen. The principles of morality and of religion are equally rooted in our nature: they are indeed weak in children and in ſavages; but they grow up together, and advance toward maturity with equal ſteps. Where the moral ſenſe is entire, there muſt be a ſenſe of religion; and if a man who has no ſenſe of religion live decently in ſociety, he is more indebted for his conduct to good temper than to ſound morals.

We have the authority of the Prophet Micah, formerly quoted, for holding, that religion, or, in other words, our duty to God, conſiſts in doing juſtice, in loving mercy, and in walking humbly with him. The laſt is the foundation of religious worſhip, diſcuſſed in the foregoing ſection: the two former belong to the preſent ſection. And if we have gratitude to our Maker and Benefactor, if we owe implicit obedience to his will as our rightful ſovereign, we ought not to ſeparate the worſhip we owe to him, from juſtice and benevolence to our fellow-creatures; for to be unjuſt to

them,

them, to be cruel or hard-hearted, is a transgression of his will, no less gross than a total neglect of religious worship. "Master, which is the great "commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy "heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. "This is the first and great commandment. And "the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy "neighbour as thyself. On these two command-"ments hang all the law and the prophets*." "Then shall the King say unto them on his right "hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit "the kingdom prepared for you. For I was "hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, "and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and "ye took me in: naked, and ye cloathed me: "sick, and ye visited me: in prison, and ye came "unto me. Then shall the righteous answer, "saying, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, and "fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? "When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee "in? or naked, and cloathed thee? When saw "we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? "And the King shall answer, Verily I say unto "you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of "the least of these my brethren, ye have done it "unto me†." "Pure religion and undefiled be-"fore God, is this, To visit the fatherless and "widow

* Matthew, xxii. 36. † Matthew, xxv. 34.

"widow in their affliction; and to keep himself "unspotted from the world *." "Hostias et vic-"timas Domino offeram quas in usum mei pro-"tulit, ut rejiciam ei suum munus? Ingratum "est; cùm sit litabilis hostia bonus animus, et "pura mens, et sincera conscientia. Igitur qui "innocentiam colit, Domino supplicat; qui justi-"tiam, Deo libat; qui fraudibus abstinet, pro-"pitiat Deum; qui hominem periculo subripit, "optimam victimam cædit. Hæc nostra sacrificia, "hæc Dei sacra sunt. Sic apud nos religiosior est "ille, qui justior †." The laws of Zaleucus, law-giver to the Locrians, who lived before the days of Pythagoras, are introduced with the following preamble. "No man can question the existence "of Deity who observes the order and harmony "of the universe, which cannot be the production "of chance. Men ought to bridle their passions, "and

* James, i. 27.

† "Shall I offer to God for a sacrifice those creatures "which his bounty has given me for my use? It were "ingratitude to throw back the gift upon the giver. The "most acceptable sacrifice is an upright mind, an un-"tainted conscience, and an honest heart. The actions of "the innocent ascend to God in prayer; the observance "of justice is more grateful than incense; the man who "is sincere in his dealings, secures the favour of his Crea-"tor; and the delivery of a fellow-creature from danger "or destruction, is dearer in the eyes of the Almighty "than the sacrifice of blood."——*Minucius Fælix.*

"and to guard against every vice. God is pleased "with no sacrifice but a sincere heart; and differs widely from mortals, whose delight is splen"did ceremonies and rich offerings. Let justice "therefore be studied; for by that only can a "man be acceptable to the Deity. Let those who "are tempted to do ill, have always before their "eyes the severe judgments of the gods against "wicked men. Let them always keep in view "the hour of death, that fatal hour which is at"tended with bitter remorse for transgressing the "rules of justice. If a bad disposition incline you "to vice, pray to Heaven, at the foot of the altar, "to mend your heart."

Morality is thus included in religion. Some nations, however, leave not this proposition to reasoning or conviction, but engross many moral duties in their religious creed. In the 67th chapter of the Sadder, a lie is declared to be a great sin, and is forbid even where it tends to bring about good. So much purer is the morality of the ancient Persians than of the present Jesuits. The religion of the people of Pegu, inculcates charity, forbids to kill, to steal or to injure others. Attend to the consequence: that people, fierce originally, have become humane and compassionate. In a sacred book of the ancient Persians, it is written, "If you incline to be a saint, give good education "to your children; for their virtuous actions will "be imputed to you." The people of Japan pay great

great respect to their parents; it being an article in their creed, That those who fail in duty to their parents, will be punished by the gods. In these two instances, religion tends greatly to connect parents and children in the most intimate tie of cordial affection. The reverence the Chinese have for their ancestors and the ceremonies performed annually at their tombs, tend to keep them at home, and prevent their wandering into foreign countries.

Ancient Persia was fertile and populous: at present it is barren and thin of inhabitants. Sir John Chardin accounts for the difference. The climate of Persia is so dry, that scarce a shower falls during summer: even grass will not grow without being watered. This defect of climate was remedied by the ancient inhabitants, termed *Gaures*; among whom it was a religious act, to cultivate waste land and to plant trees for fruit. It was a maxim in the sacred book of that religion, That he who cultivates the ground with care and diligence, acquires a greater stock of religious merit, that can be acquired by ten thousand prayers. The religion, on the contrary, of the present Mahometan inhabitants, leads them to take no care for to-morrow: they grasp at present enjoyment, and leave all the rest to fate.

Superstitious rites in some religions, are successfully employed to enforce certain moral duties. The Romans commonly made their solemn covenants in the Capitol, before the statue of Jupiter; by

by which ſolemnity he was underſtood to guarantee the covenant, ready to pour out vengeance upon the tranſgreſſor. When an oath enters into any engagement, the Burates, a people in Grand Tartary, require it to be given upon a mountain, held to be ſacred: they are firmly perſuaded, that the perſon who ſwears a falſehood, will not come down alive. The Eſſenes, a Jewiſh ſect, bound themſelves by a ſolemn oath, to ſhun unlawful gain, to be faithful to their promiſes, not to lie, and never to harm any one. In Cochin-China, the ſouls of thoſe who have been eminent for arts or arms, are worſhipped. Their ſtatues are placed in the temples; and the ſize of a ſtatue is proportioned to the merit of the perſon repreſented. If that be impartially executed, there cannot be a nobler incitement to public ſpirit. The Egyptians did not reach the thought of honouring virtue after death; but they diſhonoured vice, by excluding it from the Elyſian fields.

The ſalutary influence of religion on morality, is not confined to pure religion, whether by its connection with morality in general, or by inculcating particular moral duties. There are many religious doctrines, doubtful or perhaps erroneous, that contribute alſo to enforce morality. Some followers of Confucius aſcribe immortality to the ſouls of the juſt only; and believe that the ſouls of the wicked periſh with their bodies. The native Hindoos are gentle and humane: the metempſychoſis

chosis or transmigration of souls, is an article in their creed; and hence the prohibition to destroy any living creature, because it might disturb the soul of an ancestor. In the second chapter of the Sadder, it is written, that a man whose good works are more numerous than his sins, will go to paradise; otherwise that he will be thrust into hell, there to remain for ever. It adds, that a bridge erected over the great abyss where hell is situated, leads from this earth to paradise; that upon the bridge there stands an angel, who weighs in a balance the merits of the passengers; that the passenger whose good works are found light in the balance, is thrown over the bridge into hell; but that the passenger whose good works preponderate, proceeds in his journey to paradise, where there is a glorious city, gardens, rivers, and beautiful virgins, whose looks are a perpetual feast, but who must not be enjoyed. In the fourth chapter of the Sadder, good works are zealously recommended in the following parable. Zeradusht, or Zoroaster, being in company with God, saw a man in hell who wanted his right foot. "Oh my Creator," said Zoroaster, "who is that man who wants the right "foot? God answered, He was the king of thirty-"three cities, reigned many years, but never did "any good, except once, when, seeing a sheep "tied where it could not reach its food, he with "his right foot pushed the food to it; upon which "account that foot was saved from hell." In Japan,

pan, those of the Sinto religion believe, that the souls of good men are translated to a place of happiness, next to the habitation of their gods. But they admit no place of torment; nor have they any notion of a devil, but what animates the fox, a very mischievous animal in that country. What then becomes of the souls of ill men? Being denied entrance into heaven, they wander about to expiate their sins. Those of the Bubsdo religion believe, that in the other world, there is a place of misery as well as of happiness. Of the latter there are different degrees, for different degrees of virtue; and yet, far from envying the happier lot of others, every inhabitant is perfectly satisfied with his own. There are also different degrees of misery; for justice requires, that every man be punished according to the nature and number of his sins. *Jemma O* is the severe judge of the wicked: their vices appear to him in all their horror, by means of a mirror, named *the mirror of knowledge*. When souls have expiated their sins, after suffering long in the prison of darkness, they are sent back into the world, to animate serpents, toads, and such vile animals as resembled them in their former existence. From these they pass into the bodies of more innocent animals; and at last are again suffered to enter human bodies; after the dissolution of which, they run the same course of happiness or misery as at first. The people of Benin, in Africa, believe a man's shadow

to be a real being, that gives teſtimony after death for or againſt him; and that he accordingly is made happy or miſerable in another world. The Negroes hold that their own country is delicious above all others; and it is the belief of ſeveral of their tribes, that where-ever they die, they will return to their own country. This is a perpetual ſource of comfort, and inſpires them with humanity above the other tribes. A religious belief in ancient Greece, that the ſouls of thoſe who are left above ground without rites, have not acceſs to Elyſium, tended to promote humanity; for thoſe who are careful of the dead, will not be altogether indifferent about the living.

Immenſe are the bleſſings that proceed from the union of pure religion with ſound morality: but however immenſe, I boldly affirm, that they ſcarce counterbalance the manifold evils that proceed from impure religion, indulging and even encouraging groſs immoralities. A few glaring inſtances ſhall be ſelected. The firſt I ſhall mention is, the holding religion to conſiſt in the belief of points purely ſpeculative, ſuch as have no relation to good works. The natural effect of that doctrine is, to divorce religion from morality, in manifeſt contradiction to the will of God. What avails it, for example, to the glory of God or to the happineſs of men, whether the conception of the Virgin Mary, was maculate or immaculate? The following few inſtances, ſelected from a great number,

number, are controverſies of that kind, which for ages miſerably afflicted the Chriſtian church, and engendered the bittereſt enmity, productive of deſtruction and ſlaughter among brethren of the ſame religion. In the fifth century, it was the employment of more than one general council, to determine, whether *the mother of God*, or *the mother of Chriſt*, is the proper epithet of the Virgin Mary. In the ſixth century, a bitter controverſy aroſe whether Chriſt's body was corruptible. In the ſeventh century, Chriſtians were divided about the volition of Chriſt, whether he had one or two Wills, and how his Will operated. In the eighth and ninth centuries, the Greek and Latin churches divided about the Holy Ghoſt, whether he proceeded from the Father and Son, or only from the Father. In the eleventh century, there aroſe a warm conteſt between the Greek and Latin churches about uſing unleavened bread in the euchariſt. In the fourteenth century, it was controverted between Pope John XXII. and the divines of his time, whether ſouls in their intermediate ſtate ſee God, or only the human nature of Chriſt. Franciſcans have ſuffered death in multitudes about the form of their hood. It was diſputed between the Dominicans and Franciſcans, whether Chriſt had any property. The Pope pronounced the negative propoſition to be a peſtilential and blaſphemous doctrine, ſubverſive of Catholic faith. Many councils were held at Conſtantinople, to de-

 termine

termine what sort of light it was that the disciples saw on Mount Tabor: it was solemnly pronounced, to be the eternal light with which God is encircled; and which may be termed his energy or operation, but is distinct from his nature and essence. A heap of propositions in the creed of St Athanasius, as far as intelligible, are merely speculative, such as may be adopted or rejected, without the least danger to religion, or to morality; and yet we are commanded to believe every one of them, under the pain of eternal damnation. An endless number of such propositions, adopted by the Romish church, clearly evince, that Christianity was in that church held to consist entirely in belief, without any regard to good works *. Whether the Alcoran be eternal, or whether it were created, is a dispute that has occasioned much effusion of Mahometan blood. The Calif Mamoun, with many doctors, held it to have been created; but the greater number insisted, that being the word of God, it must like him be eternal. This opinion is embraced by the present Mahometans, who hold all who deny it to be infidels. One great maxim of the Brahmins contained in their ancient books, is,

* The great weight that was laid upon orthodoxy, appears from a triumphal arch erected over the tomb of Charlemagne, upon which was the following inscription: "Here lies the body of Charles, a great and orthodox emperor." And yet that orthodox Emperor could not write his name.

is, that it is better to sit than to walk, better to lie than to sit, better to sleep than to wake, better to die than to live. This is directly subversive of industry, and consequently of morality. There is among men great uniformity of opinion in matters of importance. Religious differences are generally about trifles, where liberty ought to be indulged without reserve *; and yet upon these trifles are founded the bitterest enmities. It ought therefore to be a fundamental law in every church, to abstain from loading its creed with articles that are not essential: for such articles tend to eradicate brotherly love, and to convert into bitter enemies, men who are fundamentally of the same faith. This leads me naturally to say a few words on religion as a branch of education, of all the most important branch. Avoiding all the points disputed among the different sects of Christians, and leaving mysteries to the future sagacity of your children if they shall be inclined to pry into them, let them know that there is a God over all who loves the good, and is an enemy to evil-doers; that this great Being, though invisible to us, is witness to all our words and actions, and that even our secret thoughts are not hid from him. Take every opportunity to inculcate this great truth, till it make so deep an impression as to be the great regulator of their conduct. With respect to every intended action, train them

* Elements of Criticism, vol. ii. p. 493. edit. 5.

them up into the habit of inquiring firſt how it will appear in the ſight of their Maker at the great day of judgment. This is true religion, the main ſupport of virtue. It is all that is requiſite in point of education; leaving to thoſe who have penetration and leiſure to form a more complete ſyſtem.

In the next place ſhall be mentioned, certain articles of faith that tend to ſap the very foundation of one or other moral duty. What, for example, can more effectually promote cruelty, than the creed of the Idaans, a people in the iſland of Borneo, That every perſon they put to death muſt attend them as a ſlave in the other world? This belief makes them prone to war, and occaſions aſſaſſinations without end. According to the creed of the ſavages in Canada, the killing and burning enemies are what chiefly entitle them to be happy in another world; and that he who deſtroys the greateſt number, will be the moſt happy. At the ſame time, they have no notion of greater happineſs there, than plenty of game, great abundance of all things without labour, and full gratification of every ſenſual appetite. The Scandinavians had no notion of greater bliſs in another world, than to drink beer out of the ſkull of an enemy, in the hall of Woden their tutelar deity: can hatred and revenge indulged in this world be more honourably rewarded? The doctrine of tutelar deities is equally productive of hatred and revenge: relying

relying on a ſuperior power who eſpouſes all my quarrels, I put no bounds to my reſentment, and every moral duty in oppoſition is trampled under foot. The following creed of the inhabitants of the Marian or Ladrone iſlands, is a great encouragement to cowardice. Heaven, according to that creed, is a region under the earth, filled with cocoa-trees, ſugar-canes, and variety of other delicious fruits. Hell is a vaſt furnace, conſtantly red-hot. Their condition in the other world depends not on good or bad actions, but on the manner of their death. Thoſe who die a natural death, go ſtraight to heaven: they may ſin freely, if they can but ſecure their perſons againſt violence. But war and bloodſhed are their averſion, becauſe thoſe who ſuffer a violent death go ſtraight to hell. In many ancient nations, a goddeſs was worſhipped, whoſe province it was to promote animal love without regard to matrimony. That goddeſs was in Greece termed *Aphrodité*, in Rome *Venus*, and in Babylon *Mylitta*. To her was ſacrificed, in ſome countries, the virginity of young women; which, it was believed, did ſecure their chaſtity for ever after. Juſtin mentions a cuſtom in the iſland of Cyprus, of ſending young women at ſtated times to the ſea-ſhore; where they proſtituted themſelves as a tribute to Venus, that they might be chaſte the reſt of their lives. His words are, "Pro reliqua pudicitiæ libamenta Veneri ſo-

 "luturas."

"luturas *." In other nations, a ſmall number only were proſtituted, in order to ſecure to the remainder, a chaſte and regular life. This explains a cuſtom among the Babylonians, which, far from being thought a religious act, is held as a proof of abandoned debauchery. The cuſtom was, That every woman once in her life ſhould proſtitute herſelf in the temple of the goddeſs Mylitta. Herodotus reports, that thereby they became proof againſt all temptation. And Ælian obſerves the ſame of the Lydian ladies. *Credat Judæus apella.* Margaret Poretta, who in the fourteenth century made a figure among the Beguines, preached a doctrine not a little favourable to incontinence, She undertook to demonſtrate, "That the ſoul, "when abſorbed in the love of God, is free from "the reſtraint of law, and may freely gratify every "natural appetite, without contracting guilt;" a cordial doctrine for a lady of pleaſure. That crazy perſon, inſtead of being laughed at, was burnt alive at Paris. In the fifteenth century, a ſect termed *brethren and ſiſters of the free ſpirit,* held, That modeſty is a mark of inhering corruption; and that thoſe only are perfect, who can behold nakedneſs without emotion. Theſe fanatics appeared at public worſhip, without the leaſt covering. Many tenets profeſſed by the Jeſuits, open a door to every immorality. "Perſons truly wicked, and void of the love of God, may expect "eternal

* Lib. xviii. cap. 5.

"eternal life in heaven; provided only they be "impressed with fear of divine anger, and avoid "heinous crimes through the dread of future pu- "nishment." Again, "Persons may transgress "with safety, who have any plausible argument "for transgressing. A judge, for example, may "decide for the least probable side of a question, "and even against his own opinion, provided he "be supported by any tolerable authority." Again, "Actions intrinsically evil, and contrary to "divine law, may however be innocently per- "formed by those who can join, even ideally, a "good end to the performance. For example, an "ecclesiastic may safely commit simony by pur- "chasing a benefice, if to the unlawful act, he "join the innocent purpose of procuring to him- "self a subsistence. A man who runs another "through the body for a slight affront, renders "the action lawful, if his motive be honour, not "revenge." A famous Jesuit taught, that a young man may wish the death of his father, and even rejoice at his death, provided the wish proceed, not from hatred, but from fondness of his father's estate. And another Jesuit has had the effrontery to maintain, that a monk may lawfully assassinate a calumniator, who threatens to charge his order with scandalous practices. Among the negroes of Sanguin, on the river Sestro in Guinea, it is an article of faith that dextrous robbery is no less lawful than beneficial.

The

The Quakers, a sect generated during the civil wars in the reign of Charles I., contracted such an aversion to war as to declare it unlawful even in self-defence; a doctrine that soars high above morality, and is contradictory to human nature. But by what magic has a tenet so unnatural subsisted so long? The Quakers exclude pride, admitting no difference of rank, but considering all men as their brethren. And they exclude vanity by simplicity and uniformity of dress. Thus, by humility and temperance, they have preserved their institutions alive. But these passions cannot always be kept in subjection: vanity is creeping in, especially among the females, who indulge in silks, fine linen, bone-lace, &c. Vanity and pride will reach the males; and the edifice will totter and fall.

A doctrine that strikes at the root of every moral duty, as well as of religion itself, is, That God will accept a composition for sin; a doctrine that prevailed universally during the days of ignorance. Compositions for crimes were countenanced by law in every country *; and men, prone to indulge their passions, flattered themselves, that they might compound with God for sinning against him, as with their neighbours for injuring them: those who have no notion of any motive but interest, naturally think it to be equally powerful with the Deity. An opinion prevailed universally in the Christian

* Historical Law Tracts, Tract I.

Chriſtian church, from the eighth century down to the Reformation, that liberal donations to God, to a ſaint, to the church, would procure pardon even for the groſſeſt ſins. During that period, the building churches and monaſteries was in high vogue. This abſurd, or rather impious doctrine, proved a plentiful harveſt of wealth to the clergy; for the great and opulent, who are commonly the boldeſt ſinners, have the greateſt ability to compound for their ſins. There needs nothing but ſuch an opinion, to annihilate every duty, whether moral or religious; for what wicked man will think either of reſtitution or of reformation, who can purchaſe a pardon from Heaven with ſo little trouble? Louis XI. of France was remarkably ſuperſtitious, even in a ſuperſtitious age. To ingratiate himſelf with the Virgin Mary, he ſurrendered to her the county of Boulogne with great ſolemnity. Voltaire remarks, that godlineſs conſiſts, not in making the Virgin a Counteſs, but in abſtaining from ſin. Compoſition for ſins is a doctrine of the church of Rome, boldly profeſſed without diſguiſe. A book of rates, publiſhed by authority of the Pope, contains ſtated prices for abſolutions, not excepting the moſt heinous ſins. So true is the obſervation of Æneas Silvius, afterwards Pope Paul II. "Nihil eſt quod abſque "argento Romana curia det: ipſa manuum im-"poſitio, et Spiritus Sancti dona, venduntur; nec

"peccatorum

"peccatorum venia nisi nummatis impenditur *." Of all the immoral atonements for sin, human sacrifices are the most brutal; deviating no less from the purity of religion, than from the fundamental principles of morality. They wore out of use as kindly affections prevailed; and will never again be restored, unless we fall back to the savage manners of our forefathers. Composition for crimes, once universal, is now banished from every enlightened nation. Composition for sins, was once equally universal; and I wish it could be said, that there are now no remains of that poisonous opinion among Christians: the practice of the church of Rome will not permit it to be said. Were men deeply convinced, as they ought to be, that sincere repentance and reformation of manners are the only means for obtaining pardon, they would never dream of making bargains with the Almighty, and of compounding with him for their sins.

In the practice of religion, the laying too great weight on forms, ceremonies, and other external arbitrary acts, tends to the corruption of morals. That error has infected every religion. The Sad-
der,

* "There is nothing to be obtained from the court of "Rome but by the force of money: even the ceremony of "consecration, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost, are sold; "and the remission of sins is bestowed only on those who can "pay for it."

der, the Bible of the Gaures, prohibits calumny and detraction, lying, ſtealing, adultery, and fornication. It, however, enervates morality and religion, by placing many trifling acts on a level with the moſt important duties. It enjoins the deſtruction of five kinds of reptiles, frogs, mice, ants, ſerpents, and flies that ſting. It teaches, that to walk barefoot profanes the ground. Great regard for water is enjoined: it muſt not be uſed during night; and when ſet upon the fire, a third part of the pot muſt be empty, to prevent boiling over. The Bramins have wofully degenerated from their original inſtitutions, thinking that religion conſiſts in forms and ceremonies. As ſoon as an infant is born, the word *Oum* muſt be pronounced over it; otherwiſe it will be eternally miſerable: its tongue muſt be rubbed with conſecrated meal: the third day of the moon, it muſt be carried into open air, with its head to the north. The inhabitants of Formoſa believe in hell; but it is only for puniſhing thoſe who fail to go naked in certain ſeaſons, or who wear cotton inſtead of ſilk. In the time of Ghenhizcan, it was held in Tartary a mortal ſin, to put a knife into the fire, to whip a horſe with his bridle, or to break one bone with another; and yet theſe pious Tartars held treachery, robbery, murder, to be no ſins. A faction in Ægina, a Greek commonwealth, treacherouſly aſſaſſinated ſeven hundred of their fellow-citizens. They cut off the hands of a miſerable fugitive,

fugitive, who had laid hold of the altar for protection, in order to murder him without the precincts of the temple. Their treacherous assassinations made no impression: but though they refrained from murder in the temple, yet by profaning it with blood, says Herodotus, they offended the gods, and contracted inexpiable guilt. Would one believe, that a tribunal was established by Charlemagne more horrible than the inquisition itself? It was established in Westphalia, to punish with death every Saxon who eat meat in lent. It was established in Flanders and in French-county, the beginning of the seventeenth century. Smollet in his travels into Italy observes, that it is held more infamous to transgress the slightest ceremonial institution of the church of Rome, than to transgress any moral duty; that a murderer or adulterer will be easily absolved by the church, and even maintain his character in society; but that a man who eats a pigeon on a Saturday, is abhorred as a monster of reprobation. During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, long curled hair, of which men of fashion in England were extremely vain, suffered a violent persecution. Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury, pronounced the sentence of excommunication against those who indulged in that dress; and was celebrated by his brethren of the clergy, though at that time excommunication was a dreadful punishment. William of Malmsbury relates in lively colours an incident

cident that ſhows the groſs ſuperſtition of that age. "A certain knight, who was very proud of "his long luxuriant hair, dreamed that a perſon "ſuffocated him with its curls. As ſoon as he "awoke from his ſleep, he cut his hair to a decent "length. The report of this ſpread over all Eng-"land; and almoſt all the knights reduced their "hair to the proper ſtandard. But this reforma-"tion was not of long continuance. For in leſs "than a year all who wiſhed to appear faſhion-"able, returned to their former wickedneſs, and "contended with the ladies in length of hair. "Thoſe to whom nature had denied that orna-"ment, ſupplied the defect by art." What can be more groſsly ſuperſtitious than the form uſed in Roman Catholic countries, of baptizing a church-bell? The prieſt, aſſiſted by ſome of his brethren, mumbles over ſome prayers, and ſprinkles the outſide with holy water, while they waſh the inſide with the ſame precious liquor. The prieſt next draws ſeven croſſes on the outſide, and four on the inſide, with conſecrated oil. Then a cenſer, full of frankincenſe, is put under the bell to ſmoke it. And the whole concludes with prayer.

Liſten to a celebrated writer upon this ſubject. "It is certain, that in every religion, however ſu-"blime, many of the votaries, perhaps the greateſt "number, will ſtill ſeek the divine favour, not by "virtue and good morals, which alone can be ac-

"ceptable

"ceptable to a perfect being, but either by frivo-
"lous observances, by intemperate zeal, by rap-
"turous ecstasies, or by the belief of mysterious
"and absurd opinions. When the old Romans
"were attacked with a pestilence, they never
"ascribed their sufferings to their vices, or dream-
"ed of repentance and amendment. They never
"thought that they were the general robbers of
"the world, whose ambition and avarice made
"desolate the earth, and reduced opulent nations
"to want and beggary. They only created a
"dictator in order to drive a nail into a door;
"and by that means they thought that they had
"sufficiently appeased their incensed deity *."
Thus, gradually, the essentials of religion wear out of mind, by the attention given to forms and ceremonies: these intercept and exhaust the whole stock of devotion, which ought to be reserved for the higher exercises of religion. The neglect or transgression of mere punctilios, are punished as heinous sins; while sins really heinous are suffered to pass with impunity. The Jews exalted the keeping their Sabbath holy, above every other duty; and it was the general belief, that the strict observance of that day, was alone sufficient to atone for every sin. The command of resting that day, was taken so literally, that they would not on that day defend themselves even against an assassin.

* Natural History of Religion, by David Hume Esq.

aſſaſſin. Ptolomy, ſon of Lagus, entered Jeruſalem on the Jewiſh ſabbath, in a hoſtile manner without reſiſtance. Nor did experience open the eyes of that fooliſh people. Xiphilin, relating the ſiege of Jeruſalem by Pompey, ſays, that if the Jews had not reſted on the ſabbath, Pompey would not have been ſucceſsful. Every Saturday he renewed his batteries; and having on that day made a breach, he marched into the town without oppoſition. One cannot help ſmiling at an Amſterdam Jew, who had no check of conſcience for breaking open a houſe and carrying off money; and yet being ſtopped in his flight by the ſabbath, he moſt piouſly reſted, till he was apprehended, and led to the gallows. Nor are the Jews to this day cured of that frenzy. In ſome late accounts from Conſtantinople, a fire broke out in a Jew's houſe on Saturday: rather than profane the ſabbath, he ſuffered the flames to ſpread, which occaſioned the deſtruction of five hundred houſes *. We laugh at

* "And there was a woman which had a ſpirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together. And Jeſus laid his hands on her, and immediately ſhe was made ſtraight, and glorified God. And the ruler of the ſynagogue with indignation ſaid unto the people, There are ſix days in which men ought to work: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the ſabbath-day. The Lord then ſaid, Thou hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the ſabbath looſe his ox or his aſs from the

at the Jews, and we have reafon; and yet there are many well-meaning Proteftants, who lay the whole of religion upon punctual attendance at public worfhip. Are the Roman Catholics lefs fuperftitious with refpect to the place of worfhip, than the Jews are with refpect to the day of worfhip? In the year 1670, fome Arabians, watching an opportunity, got into the town of Dieu, when the gates were opened in the morning. They might eafily have been expelled by the cannon of the citadel; but the Portuguefe governor was obliged to look on without firing a gun, being threatened with excommunication, if the leaft mifchief fhould be done to any of the churches. The only doctrine inculcated from the Romifh pulpit down to the Reformation, were the authority of holy mother-church; the merit of the faints, and their credit in the court of heaven; the dignity and glory of the bleffed Virgin; the efficacy of relics; the intolerable fire of Purgatory; and the vaft importance of indulgencies. Relying on fuch pious acts for obtaining remiffion of fin, all orders of men rufhed headlong into vice *; nor was there a fingle attempt

" the ftall, and lead him away to watering? and ought " not this woman, whom Satan hath bound, be loofed " from this bond on the fabbath-day? *Luke* xiii. 11.

* An ingenious writer pleafantly obferves, " That a " croifade was the South-Sea project of former times: by " the latter, men hoped to gain riches without induftry: " by

attempt to ftem the current of immorality; for the traffic of indulgencies could not but flourifh in proportion to the growth of fin. And thus was religion fet in direct oppofition to morality. St Eloy, bifhop of Noyon in the feventh century, and canonized by the church of Rome, delivers the following doctrine. "He is a good chriftian who goes "frequently to church; who prefents his obla-"tions upon the altar; who taftes not the fruit of "his own induftry till part be confecrated to "God; who, when the holy feftivals approach, "lives chaftely even with his own wife for feveral "days; and who can repeat the creed and the "Lord's prayer. Redeem then your fouls from "deftruction, while you have the means in your "power: offer prefents and tithes to churchmen: "come more frequently to church: humbly im-"plore the patronage of faints. If you obferve "thefe things, you may, in the day of judgment, "go with confidence to the tribunal of the eternal "Judge, and fay, Give to us, O Lord, for we have "given unto thee." A modern author fubjoins a proper obfervation. "We fee here a very ample "defcription of a good chriftian, in which there is "not the leaft mention of the love of God, refigna-"tion to his will, obedience to his laws, nor of "juftice,

"by the former, they hoped to gain heaven without re-"pentance, amendment of life, or fanctity of manners." *Sir David Dalrymple, a Judge in the Court of Seffion.*

" juftice, benevolence, or charity." Grofs ignorance and wretched fuperftition prevailed fo much even in the fourteenth century, that people reckoned themfelves fecure of falvation, if at the day of judgment they could fhow any connection with monks. Many at the point of death, made it their laft requeft, to be admitted into the mendicant order, or to be interred in their burial-place. Religion need not affociate with morality, if fuch filly practices be fufficient for obtaining the favour of God. Is this lefs abfurd than the Hindoftan belief, That the water of the Ganges hath a fanctifying virtue; and that thofe who die on its banks, are not only exempted from future punifhment, but are wafted ftraight to paradife?

Forms and ceremonies are vifible acts, which make a deep impreffion on the vulgar. Hence their influence in reafoning and in morality, as we have feen in the two fketches immediately foregoing; and hence alfo their influence in religion. Forms and ceremonies are ufeful at public worfhip: but they ought not to take place of effentials. People however, governed by what they fee and hear, are more addicted to external acts of devotion, than to heart worfhip, which is not known but by reflection.

It will be no excufe for relying fo much on forms and ceremonies, that they are innocent. In themfelves they may be innocent; but not fo in their confequences. For they have by fuch reliance

ance a vigorous tendency to relax the obligations of morality. " La pure morale," ſays M. Rouſſeau, " eſt ſi chargée de devoirs ſéveres que ſi on " la ſurcharge encore de formes indifférentes, " c'eſt preſque toujours aux dépends de l'eſſentiel. " On dit que c'eſt le cas de la plupart des moines, " qui, ſoumis à mille regles inutiles, ne ſavent ce " que c'eſt qu'honneur et vertu." Religious rites that contradict not any paſſion, are keenly embraced, and punctally performed; and men, flattering themſelves that they have thus been punctual in their duty to God, give vent to their paſſions againſt men. " They pay tithes of mint, and an- " niſe, and cummin; but omit the weightier mat- " ters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith *." Upon ſuch a man religion ſits extremely light. As he ſeldom exerciſes any act of genuine devotion, he thinks of the Deity with eaſe and familiarity: how otherwiſe is it accountable, that the plays, termed *Myſteries*, could be reliſhed, where mean and perhaps diſſolute perſons are brought on the ſtage, acting Jeſus Chriſt, the Virgin Mary, and even God himſelf? Theſe objects of worſhip were certainly no more regarded than the Grecian gods, who frequently made part of the *Dramatis perſonæ* in Greek plays. Many other facts might be urged, to prove the low ebb of religion in thoſe days: I ſelect one or two, which probably will afford ſome amuſement to the reader. Bartolus,

* Matthew xxiii. 23.

mersion, *In name of the Father ;* at the second, *In name of the Son ;* at the third, *In name of the Holy Ghost.* This form is bitterly condemned by the Romish church, which appoints the three persons of the Trinity to be joined in the same expression, in token of their union. Strahlenberg gives an account of a Christian sect in Russia, which differs from the established Greek church in the following particulars: First, In public worship they repeat *Halleluia* but twice; and it is a mortal sin to repeat it thrice. Second, In celebrating mass, not five but seven loaves ought to be used. Third, The cross stamped upon a mass-loaf ought to have eight corners. Fourth, In signing with the cross at prayers, the end of the ring-finger must be joined to the end of the thumb, and the two intermediate fingers be held out at full length. How trifling are these differences! and yet for these, all who dissent from them are held unclean, and no better than Pagans: they will not eat nor drink with any of the established church; and, if a person of that church happen to sit down in a house of theirs, they wash and purify the seat *.

There

* Christians, occupied too much with external forms, have corrupted several of the fine arts. They have injured architecture, by erecting magnificent churches in the ugly form of a cross. And they have injured painting, by withdrawing the best hands from proper subjects, and employing them on the legendary martyrdom of pretended saints, and other such disagreeable subjects.

There are few sects founded upon more trivial differences than the Turkish and Persian Mahometans. The epithets given to the Persians by the Turks are, "Forsaken of God, Abominable, "Blasphemers of the Holy Prophet;" and so bitter is their enmity to the Persians, That the schools of the seraglio are open to young men of all nations, those of Persia alone excepted. The Persians are held to be such apostates from the true faith, as to be utterly past recovery: they receive no quarter in war, being accounted unworthy of life or slavery: nor do the Persians yield to the Turks in hatred. Whether coffee be or be not prohibited in the Alcoran, has produced much controversy in the Mahometan church, and consequently much persecuting zeal. A mufti, not fond of coffee, declared it to have an inebriating quality, and therefore to be virtually prohibited by Mahomet. Another mufti, fond of coffee for its exhilarating virtue, declared it lawful; "because," said he, "all things are lawful that are "not expressly prohibited in the Alcoran." The coffee-houses in Constantinople were for a long period alternately opened and shut, according to the taste of the reigning mufti; till coffee at last, surmounting all obstacles, came to be an established Mahometan liquor. Religion thus runs wild, whenever it loses sight of its true ends, worshipping God, and enforcing justice to man. The Hindoos hate the Mahometans for eating the flesh of

of cows: the Mahometans hate the Hindoos for eating the flesh of swine. The aversion that men of the same religion have at each other for the most trivial differences, converts them frequently into brutal savages. Suppose, for example, that a man, reduced to the extremity of hunger, makes a greedy meal of a dead horse, a case so deplorable would wring every heart. And yet, let this be done in Lent, or on a meagre day——Behold! every zealot is instantly metamorphosed into a devil incarnate. In the records of St Claude, a small district of Burgundy, is engrossed a sentence against a poor gentleman named *Claude Guillon.* The words are: "Having considered the process, "and taken advice of the doctors of law, we de- "clare the said Claude Guillon duly convicted "for having carried away and boiled a piece of "a dead horse, and of having eat the same on the "31st March, being Saturday." And he was beheaded accordingly 28th July 1629; notwithstanding a defence above all exception, That he committed that irregularity to preserve his life. How was it possible for the monsters to persuade themselves, that this sentence was agreeable to God, who is goodness itself!

No less prejudical to morality than the relying too much on forms and ceremonies, is the treating some sins with great severity; neglecting others equally heinous, or perhaps more so. In a book of rates for absolution, mentioned above, no just distinction

diftinction is made among fins; fome venial fins being taxed at a higher rate than many of the deepeft dye. For example, the killing father, mother, brother, fifter, or wife, is taxed at five grofs; and the fame for inceft with a mother or fifter. The lying with a woman in the church is taxed at fix grofs; and, at the fame time, abfolution for ufury is taxed at feven grofs, and for fimony at no lefs than fixteen grofs *.

A maxim adopted by many pious perfons, has a fmiling appearance, but in its confequences is hurtful both to religion and morality; which is, That to teftify our veneration for the Deity, and zeal for his fervice, the performing public and private worfhip, and the fulfilling moral duties, are not alone fufficient; that over and above we are bound to faft, to do penance, to honour the priefthood, and to punifh the enemies of God, *i. e.* thofe who differ from us in principle or practice. This maxim, which may be termed *the doctrine of fupererogation*, is finely illuftrated by an author mentioned above. "The duties which a man "performs as a friend or parent, feem merely "owing to his benefactor or children; nor can "he be wanting to thefe duties without breaking "through all the ties of nature and morality. A "ftrong inclination may prompt him to the per-"formance: a fentiment of order and moral "beauty joins its force to thefe natural ties: and "the

* A grofs is the third part of a ducat.

" the whole man is drawn to his duty without
" any effort or endeavour. Even with regard to
" the virtues which are more auftere, and more
" founded on reflection, fuch as public fpirit, filial
" duty, temperance, or integrity: the moral ob-
" ligation, in our apprehenfion, removes all pre-
" tence to religious merit: and the virtuous con-
" duct is efteemed no more than what we owe to
" fociety, and to ourfelves. In all this, a fuper-
" ftitious man finds nothing which he has pro-
" perly performed for the fake of his Deity, or
" which can peculiary recommend him to the
" divine favour and protection. He confiders not,
" that the moft genuine method of ferving the
" Divinity is, by promoting the happinefs of his
" creatures. He ftill looks out for fome more
" immediate fervice of the Supreme Being: and
" any practice recommended to him, which either
" ferves to no purpofe in life, or offers the ftrong-
" eft violence to his natural inclinations; that
" practice he will the more readily embrace, on
" account of thofe very circumftances, which
" fhould make him abfolutely reject it. It feems
" the more purely religious, that it proceeds from
" no mixture of any other motive or confidera-
" tion. And if for its fake he facrifices much of
" his eafe and quiet, his claim of merit appears
" ftill to rife upon him, in proportion to the zeal
" and devotion which he difcovers. In reftoring
" a loan, or paying a debt, his divinity is nowife
" beholden

"beholden to him; becaufe thefe acts of juftice "are what he was bound to perform, and what "many would have performed, were there no "God in the univerfe. But if he faft a day, or "give himfelf a found whipping, this has a di- "rect reference, in his opinion, to the fervice of "God. No other motive could engage him to "fuch aufterities. By thefe diftinguifhed marks "of devotion, he has now acquired the divine "favour; and may expect in recompenfe, pro- "tection and fafety in this world, and eternal "happinefs in the next *." My yoke is eafy, faith our Saviour, and my burden is light. So they really are. Every effential of religion is founded on our nature, and to a pure heart is pleafant in the performance: what can be more pleafant, than gratitude to our Maker, and obedience to his will in comforting our fellow-creatures? But enthufiafts are not eafily perfuaded, that to make ourfelves happy in the exercifes of piety and benevolence, is the moft acceptable fervice to God that we can perform. In loading religion with unneceffary articles of faith and practice, they contradict our Saviour, by making his yoke fevere, and his burden heavy †.

Law,

* Natural Hiftory of Religion.

† An old woman walking with others to a facrament, was obferved to pick out the worft bits of the road: "I never "can do enough," faid fhe, "for fweet Jefus."

Law, who writes on Chriftian perfection, enjoins fuch unnatural aufterity of manners, as to be fubverfive both of religion and morality: loofe education is not more fo. Our paffions, when denied proper exercife, are apt to break their fetters, and to plunge us into every extravagance: like the body, which fqueezed in one part, fwells the more in another. In the fame way of thinking, the pious Jeremy Taylor, treating of mortification, prefcribes it as the indifpenfable duty of a Chriftian, to give no indulgence even to the moft innocent emotions; becaufe, fays he, the moft indifferent action becomes finful, when there is no other motive for the performance but barely its being pleafant. Could a malevolent deity contrive any thing more fevere againft his votaries?

In the fame fpirit of fupererogation, holidays have been multiplied without end, depriving the working poor of time, that would be more ufefully employed in providing bread for themfelves and families. Such a number of holidays, befide contradicting Providence which framed us more for action than contemplation, have feveral poifonous effects with refpect to morality. The moral fenfe has great influence on the induftrious, who have no time for indulging their irregular appetites: the idle, on the contrary, lie open to every temptation. Men likewife are apt to affume great merit from a rigid obfervance of holidays and other ceremonies; and having thus acquired, in their

their opinion, the favour of God, they rely on his indulgence in other matters which they think too fweet for finners.

Monaftic inftitutions are an improvement upon holidays: the whole life of a monk is intended to be a holiday, dedicated entirely to the fervice of God. The idlenefs of the monaftic ftate among Chriftians, opens a wide door to immorality.

In the third fection, penances are handled as a mode of worfhip, for obtaining pardon of fin. But they are fometimes fubmitted to by the innocent, in order to procure from the Almighty ftill more favour than innocence alone is entitled to; in which view, they are evidently a work of fupererogation. They feem to have no bad effect with refpect to religion as diftinguifhed from morality: the body is indeed tortured unneceffarily; but if enthufiafts voluntarily fubmit to bodily diftreffes, they have themfelves only to blame. With refpect to morality, their bad tendency is not flight. Thofe who perform extraordinary acts of devotion, conceive themfelves peculiarly entitled to the favour of God. Proud of his favour, they attach themfelves to him alone, and turn indifferent about every other duty. The favourite of a terreftrial potentate affumes authority; and takes liberties that private perfons dare not venture upon: fhall a favourite of Heaven be lefs indulged? The Faquirs in Hindoftan fubmit to dreadful penances; and, holding themfelves fecure of God's

God's favour, they are altogether indifferent about the duty they owe to a neighbour. So much are they above common decency, as to go about naked, not even concealing what modesty hides. The penances enjoined in the Romish church, such as fasting and flagellation, have evidently the same bad tendency *. With respect to fasting in particular, to what good purpose it can serve, except to gluttons, is not readily conceived. Temperance in eating and drinking is essential to health: too much or too little are equally noxious, though their effects are different †. Fasting, therefore, ought never to be enjoined to the temperate as a religious duty, because it cannot be acceptable to a benevolent Deity. Listen to a great prophet on that subject: "Behold, ye fast for strife and "debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness; "ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your "voice

* A sect of Christians, styled *Flagellantes*, held, that flagellation is of equal virtue with baptism and the other sacraments; that it will procure forgiveness of sin; that the old law of Christ is to be abolished; and a new law substituted, enjoining the baptism of blood to be administered by whipping.

† The Baron de Manstein observes, that the frequent lents enjoined by the Greek church, contribute greatly to promote diseases in the Russian armies. They are forbidden to touch flesh three-fourths of the year. The synod, it is true, grants a dispensation to soldiers during war; but such is the superstition of the people, that few take the benefit of the dispensation.

" voice to be heard on high. Is it ſuch a faſt that
" I have choſen? a day for a man to afflict his
" ſoul? Is it to bow down his head as a bulruſh,
" and to ſpread ſackcloth and aſhes under him?
" Wilt thou call this a faſt, and an acceptable day
" to the Lord?—Is not this the faſt that I have
" choſen, to looſe the bands of wickedneſs, to un-
" do the heavy burdens, and to let the oppreſſed
" go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not
" to deal thy bread to the hungry; and that thou
" bring the poor that are caſt out to thy houſe?
" When thou ſeeſt the naked, that thou cover
" him, and that thou hide not thyſelf from thine
" own fleſh *?"

The moſt extraordinary penance of all is celibacy conſidered as a religious duty. Many fathers of the church declare againſt matrimony. St Jerome in particular ſays, That the end of matrimony is eternal death; that the earth, indeed, is filled by it, but heaven by virginity. The intemperate zeal of many primitive Chriſtians led them to abſtain from matrimony, and even from conjugal careſſes, if they had the misfortune to be married; believing that the carnal appetite is inconſiſtent with pure religion. Edward the Confeſſor was ſainted, for no better reaſon than the abſtaining from matrimonial duties. Jovian, in the fourth century, taught that all who obſerve the laws of piety and virtue laid down in the goſpel, have an equal title to

* Iſaiah, lviii. 4. &c.

happineſs in another life: conſequently, that thoſe who paſs their days in celibacy and mortification, are in no reſpect more acceptable to God than thoſe who live virtuouſly in marriage without mortification. He publiſhed his opinions in a book, againſt which Jerome wrote a bitter and abuſive treatiſe, ſtill extant. Theſe opinions were condemned by the church, and by St Ambroſe, in a council at Milan; and Jovian was baniſhed by the Emperor Honorius. Such ridiculous ſelf-denial was not confined to Chriſtians. Strabo mentions a ſect among the Thracians who made a vow of perpetual virginity; and were much reſpected on that account. Garcillaſſo mentions virgins in Peru conſecrated to the ſun: a veſtal guilty of frailty was buried alive, her lover hanged, and the inhabitants of the town where ſhe lived put to the ſword. Among all the abſurd acts of mortification, celibacy is the ſtrongeſt inſtance of ſuperſtition triumphing over common ſenſe; for what can be more inconſiſtent with common ſenſe, not to talk of religion, than an endeavour to put an end to the human ſpecies? Barbeyrac, *De la Moriae des Pères*, gives examples of fathers of the church who wiſhed to extinguiſh by celibacy the human ſpecies, and to haſten the day of judgment. Some glimpſes of reaſon have abated the zeal of enthuſiaſts for celibacy; but have not totally extirpated it; for celibacy of the clergy remains to this day a law in the Romiſh church. It cannot, however,

ever, feriously be thought the will of our benevolent God, that his priefts fhould be denied the exercife of natural powers, beftowed on all for a moft valuable purpofe. This impious reftraint, which contradicts the great law of *Increafe and multiply*, has opened the door to grofs debauchery in the paftors of the Romifh church, though ecclefiaftics ought, of all men, to be the moft circumfpect in their conduct. Men reftrained from what is neceffary and proper, are more prone than others to break out into grofs irregularities *. Marriage is warmly recommended in the laws of Zoroafter. Children are faid to be a bridge that conducts men to heaven; and a man who has no children, is held to be under the power of Ahriman. The prayer of a prieft who has no children, is held difagreeable to Ormufd.

The celibacy of the clergy was countenanced by the Pope; and enforced from a political con-

 fideration,

* An ingenious writer, mentioned above, makes the following obfervation: "The celibacy of ecclefiaftics was originally introduced by fome fuperftitious refinements on the "law of God and nature. Could men have been kept alive "without eating or drinking as well as without marriage, the "fame refinements would have prohibited ecclefiaftics from "eating and drinking, and thereby have elevated them fo "much nearer to the ftate of angels. In procefs of time, "this fanatical interdiction became an inftrument of worldly "wifdom: and thus, as frequently happens, what weak men "began, politicians completed." *Sir David Dalrymple.*

ſideration, That it united the whole clergy into one compact body, under his ſpiritual Majeſty. How ſhort ſighted is man! It was juſtly eſteemed at the time to be the corner-ſtone of Papal power; and yet became the chief cauſe of its downfal. Celibacy precipitated the Romiſh clergy into adultery, fornication, cunning, diſſimulation, and every ſecret vice. Will men of ſuch manners be liſtened to, when they preach purity to others? There was no medium, but either to reform their own manners, or to give every indulgence to the laity. But ignorance and ſuperſtition in the latter, made the former think themſelves ſecure. The reſtoration of learning broke the charm. Men beginning to think for themſelves, were provoked at the diſſolute lives of their paſtors; and raiſed a loud cry againſt them. Reformers were burnt as heretics; and clergymen were held to be emiſſaries from Satan, to eſtabliſh his throne upon earth. Knox, that violent reformer, believed ſeriouſly that Cardinal Beaton was *a conjured enemy to Chriſt Jeſus*. Providence brings good out of ill. Had not the clergy been diſſolute, poor Chriſtians might have laboured under ignorance and eccleſiaſtic thraldom to this hour. Our reformers, beginning with their paſtors, extended inſenſibly their hatred to the doctrines taught by their paſtors. Every article of faith was ſifted: the chaff was ſeparated from the corn: and a reformation

was

was eftablifhed upon the Scriptures, rejecting every innovation of the Romifh church.

There is not mentioned in hiftory a more impudent difregard of moral principles, than a privilege affumed by the Bifhop of Rome to difengage men from their oaths and promifes: it is not a greater ftretch to difengage them from every duty, whether of morality or of religion. The barons of Valentia, dreading a perfecution againft the induftrious Moors, their tenants, obtained the following claufe to be inferted in their king's coronation-oath: "That he fhould not expel the Morifcos, nor force them to be baptized; that he "fhould never defire to be relieved from the oath "by a difpenfation from the Pope, nor accept a difpenfation if offered." The Emperor Charles V. took this oath folemnly in prefence of his nobles; and yet accepted a difpenfation from the Pope, abfolving him from the oath, and from the guilt of perjury in breaking it. Auguftus King of Poland, in the treaty of Altramftadt, renounced the kingdom of Poland to his competitor Staniflaus. The defeat of the King of Sweden at Poltowa was an inviting opportunity to renew his pretenfions. A folemn treaty ftood in his way; but the Pope removed that obftacle, by annulling the treaty, and fetting him at liberty. The Pope has been known to beftow that wonderful privilege upon others. Pope Pafcal II. having, with a folemn oath, renounced the right of inveftitures, empower-

ed the cardinals to declare his oath null. Biſhops alſo, imitating their ſuperior, have aſſumed the privilege of diſpenſing with moral duties. Inſtances are not rare, of curates being authoriſed by their biſhop to entertain concubines, paying for each a regular tax of a crown yearly. Nay, in ſome provincial ſynods, they are enjoined to keep concubines, in order to prevent ſcandal. Common proſtitutes, licenſed in the city of Leghorn, have a church peculiar to themſelves, and muſt not enter into any other. They follow their trade with the utmoſt freedom; except in Paſſion-week, during which they muſt forbear ſinning, under pain of baniſhment *.

The

* Sir David Dalrymple, in his Annals of Scotland, vol. ii. page 16., has the following paragraph: "Thus "did Edward chaſtiſe the Scots for their breach of faith. "It is remarkable, that in the preceding year he himſelf "procured a papal bull, abſólving him from the oath "which he hád taken for maintaining the privileges of his "people. But the Scots, without papal authority, viola- "ted their oaths, and were puniſhed as perjured men. It "is a truth not to be diſguiſed, that in thoſe times the "common notions of right and wrong were, in ſome ſort, "obliterated. Conſcience, intoxicated with indulgencies, "or ſtupified by frequent abſolution, was no longer a "faithful monitor amidſt the temptations of intereſt, am- "bition, and national animoſities." This author, a few pages after, very ingeniouſly obſerves, that, in thoſe days, an

The power of beſtowing kingdoms, aſſumed by the Biſhop of Rome, was an encroachment on the rules of juſtice, no leſs bold. Chriſtian princes, not many ages ago, eſteemed the Pope's gift to be their beſt title of property. In the 1346, the Venetians requeſted the Pope's permiſſion to carry on commerce in Aſia, and to purchaſe there pepper and cinnamon. The Pope not only granted their requeſt, but pronounced anathemas upon any who ſhould dare to interfere in that commerce. Ferdinand and Iſabella of Spain applied to Pope Alexander VI. to veſt in them the property of America, diſcovered under their auſpices by Columbus. The Pope having formerly granted to the kings of Portugal their diſcoveries in the Eaſt Indies, both grants were held ſacred; and it came to be ſtrenuouſly diſputed, under which of the grants the Molucca iſlands were comprehended. Both grants proceed upon a narrative, of the power beſtowed by Almighty God on the Pope, as ſucceſſor to St Peter and vicar of Chriſt. To imagine that the Almighty would beſtow ſuch powers on the Biſhop of Rome, or on any human being, ſhews groſs ignorance of the common rights of mankind, and of the government of Providence.

The groſſeſt of all deviations, not only from ſound morality, but from pure religion, and the

 moſt

an oath or promiſe on the honour of knighthood, was the only thing relied on; becauſe the Pope did not pretend to interpoſe in a point of honour.

most extensive in its baneful effects, is a doctrine embraced by established churches, not many excepted, That, because heretics are odious in the sight of God, it is the duty of the orthodox to extirpate them, root and branch. Observe the consequence: people who differ from the established church are held to be obstinate sinners, deserving punishment here as well as hereafter. The religion of every country is changeable; and the religion at present dominant may soon be under depression; which of course subjects all mankind to the rigour of persecution. An invention more effectual for extirpating the human race, is not within the reach of imagination: the horror of human sacrifices is as nothing in comparison.

Persecution for differences in religion can never take place but where the ministers of religion are formed into a class, totally distinct from the rest of the people. They made not a distinct class among the old Romans; who, far from having any notion of persecution, adopted the gods of every nation they conquered. A learned * writer observes, that, as the number of their gods increased with their conquests, it is possible that they might have worshipped all the gods in the world. Their belief in tutelar deities produced that effect. Titus Livius mentions a sect of Bacchanals spread through Italy. They performed their ceremonies during night; men and women mixing in the dark, after intemperate

* Morinus.

intemperate eating and drinking. Never did wicked wretches deserve more exemplary punishment; yet listen to the following decree of the Roman senate, breathing the true spirit of toleration. "Ne qua Bacchanalia Romæ, neve in Italia "essent. Si quis tale sacrum, solenne, et neces"sarium duceret, nec sine religione et piaculo se "id omittere posse; apud Prætorem urbanum "profiteretur; Prætor senatum consuleret. Si "ei permissum esset, quum in senatu centum non "minus essent; ita id sacrum faceret, dum ne "plus quinque sacrificio interessent; neu qua pe"cunia communis, neu quis magister sacrorum, "aut sacerdos esset*." The Jews were prone to persecution, because their priests formed a distinct body. It is true, they believed in tutelar deities: their hatred, however, of neighbouring nations prevailed to make them hold in abhorrence the worship of every other god. Even among themselves

* "Let there be no Bacchanalian ceremonies performed "in the city, nor within Italy. If there be any person "who reckons it a matter of conscience to perform these "rites, and that he ought not to omit them, let him state "his opinion to the city Prætor, who shall thereupon con"sult the senate. If liberty be granted him by the senate "when no fewer than a hundred senators are present, let "him perform the sacrifice, but privately, in presence of "no greater number than five persons. Let there be no "public fund for them, nor any who shall preside as priest "or master of the rites."

ſelves they were abundantly diſpoſed to war; and nothing kept within bounds the Phariſees, the Saducees, and the Eſſenes, their three ſects, but terror of the Roman power. The Chriſtian religion implies toleration in its very nature and principles; and yet became prone to perſecution above all others. Chriſtian ſects were inflamed againſt each other to a degree of brutality; the moſt oppoſite to peace and brotherly love, inculcated in the goſpel. It was propagated by the orthodox, that Arius expired in a common jakes, and that his entrails burſt out. The ſame is related of Huneric King of the Vandals, a zealous Arian; with the following addition, that being poſſeſſed with the devil, whom he had glutted with the blood of many martyrs, he tore his fleſh with his teeth, and ended his wretched life in the moſt excruciating, though juſtly deſerved torments. The falſehoods every where ſpread, during the fourteenth century, againſt the Jews, ſuch as their poiſoning the public fountains, killing Chriſtian infants, and drinking their blood, with many other falſehoods of the ſame ſtamp, were invented, and greedily ſwallowed, through the influence of religious hatred. Through the ſame influence a law was once made in England, that a Chriſtian marrying a Jew ſhould be burnt alive. The greater part of perſecutions have been occaſioned in the ſame manner; for men are not ſo deſperately wicked, as to approve of perſecution, unleſs when blinded by intemperate

intemperate zeal. The ſame religious hatred produced the aſſaſſination of the Duke of Guiſe, and of two Henrys, Kings of France; produced the gun-powder plot; and produced the moſt horrid deed that ever was perpetrated among men, the maſſacre of St Bartholomew *.

There is no occaſion to be particular on the maſſacre of St Bartholomew, the circumſtances of which are univerſally known. I ſhall mention another, which happened in Liſbon, 6th April 1506, the effect entirely of bigotry. The day mentioned being Sunday, certain perſons in the church of St Dominic, obſerving that a crucifix in one of the chapels was more than ordinary luminous, the prieſt cried out, A miracle! a miracle! A new convert, who had been a Jew, ſaying ſlightly that it was but the ſun ſhining on the crucifix, he was dragged inſtantly out of the church, and burnt. The friars, with vehement ſpeeches, encouraged the rabble aſſembled about the fire to more miſchief; while other friars ran about the ſtreets bawling

* Monſieur de Tavannes, afterwards Mareſchal of France, was a great partiſan of the Queen-mother; and ſo active in the maſſacre, as with his own hand to murder no fewer than ſeventeen Hugenots. Having on death-bed made a full confeſſion of his ſins, "What," ſaid the prieſt, "not a "word of St Bartholomew?" "Of St Bartholomew!" anſwered the penitent; "the ſervice I did that memorable "day to God and the church, is alone a ſufficient atone-"ment for all my tranſgreſſions."

bawling out, Herefy, herefy, with crucifixes in their hands. Above 500 men gathered together, and flew every new convert they could find, and burnt them to afhes. Next morning they murdered above 1000 men, women, and children, dragging them from the altars, to which they had fled as a fanctuary. The fame fury continued the third day, on which above 400 perfons more were maffacred.

No falfe principle in religion has fhed more innocent or rather virtuous blood, than that of perfecuting heretics; *i. e.* thofe who differ in any article from the religion eftablifhed by law. The doctrine of burning heretics, is in effect the profeffing to burn men eminently virtuous; for they muft be fo, when they fubmit to be burnt alive, rather than be guilty even of diffimulation. The Mahometan practice, of converting people by the fword, if not more rational, is at leaft more manly. Louis IX. of France, one of its beft princes, would have been a greater bleffing to his people had he been lefs pious: he had an implacable averfion to heretics; againft whom he thought it more proper to employ racks and gibbets, than argument. Torquemada, that infernal inquifitor of Spain, brought into the inquifition, in the fpace of fourteen years, no fewer than 80,000 perfons; of whom 6000 were condemned to the flames, and burnt alive with the greateft pomp and exultation. Of that vaft number, there was perhaps not a fingle perfon,

perfon, who was not more pure in religion, as well as in morals, than their outrageous perfecutor. *Hunter*, a young man about nineteen years of age, was one of the unhappy victims to the zeal of Queen Mary of England for Popery. Having been inadvertently betrayed by a prieft to deny tranfubftantiation, he abfconded, to keep out of harm's way. Bonner, that arch-hangman of Popery, threatened ruin to the father, if he did not deliver up the young man. Hunter, hearing of his father's danger, made his appearance, and was burnt alive, inftead of being rewarded for his filial piety. A woman of Guernfey was brought to the ftake, without regard to her big belly; which burfting by the torture, fhe was delivered in the midft of the flames. One of the guards fnatched the infant from the fire: but the magiftrate who attended the execution ordered it to be thrown back; being refolved, he faid, that nothing fhould furvive which fprung from a parent fo obftinately heretical. Father Paul * computes, that, in the Netherlands alone, from the time that the edict of Charles V. was promulgated againft the reformers, 50,000 perfons were hanged, beheaded, buried alive, or burnt, on account of religion. Some Faquirs, crazed with opium and fanaticifm, have been known, with poifoned daggers, to fall upon uncircumcifed Europeans, and to put every one to death whom they could mafter. In the laft century, a Faquir at Surat,

* Council of Trent, Book 5.

Surat, murdered, within the ſpace of a minute, ſeventeen Dutch ſailors with ſeventeen ſtabs of a dagger. We think with horror of human ſacrifices among the ancient Pagans; and yet we behold them every day, among Chriſtians, rendered ſtill more horrid by the moſt atrocious torments that religious hatred can deviſe.

The great motive to ſuch cruelties, is the ſuperſtitious and abſurd notion, that heretics are God's enemies; which makes it thought an acceptable ſervice to God, not only to perſecute them by fire and ſword in this world, but to deliver them over to Satan in the world to come. Another circumſtance inflames religious hatred; which is, that neighbours are either intimate friends or bitter enemies. This holds, with a ſlight variation, in ſects of the ſame religion: however minute their differences are, they cannot be intimate friends; and therefore are bitter enemies: the nearer they approach to uniſon, if not entirely ſo, the greater in proportion is their mutual hatred. Such hatred, ſubduing the meek ſpirit of Chriſtianity, is an additional cauſe for perſecution. Blind zeal for what is believed to be the only true religion, never diſcovers error nor innocence in thoſe who differ, but perverſeneſs and criminal obſtinacy. Two religions totally different, like two countries in oppoſite parts of the globe, produce no mutual enmity. At the ſiege of Conſtantinople by the Turks, anno 1453, the Emperor, in order to procure aſſiſtance

ſiſtance from the princes of the Latin church, ordered maſs to be celebrated in one of his churches according to the form uſed in Rome. The people with great indignation proteſted, that they would rather ſee the Turks in their churches, than the hat of a cardinal.

The hiſtory of the Waldenſes, though well known, cannot be too often repeated. In the twelfth century, a merchant of Lyons, named *Peter Valdo*, diſſatisfied with the pomp and ceremonies of the Romiſh church, ill ſuited, in his opinion, to the humility of a Chriſtian, retired to a deſart in the high country of Provence, with ſeveral poor people his diſciples. There he became their ſpiritual guide, inſtructing them in certain doctrines, the ſame that were afterwards adopted by the Proteſtants. Their inceſſant labour ſubdued the barren ſoil, and prepared it for grain as well as for paſture. The rent which in time they were enabled to pay for land that afforded none originally, endeared them to their landlords. In 250 years, they multiplied to the number of 18,000, occupying thirty villages, beſide hamlets, the work of their own hands. Prieſts they had none, nor any diſputes about religion: neither had they occaſion for a court of juſtice, as brotherly love did not ſuffer them to go to law: they worſhipped God in their own plain way, and their innocence was ſecured by inceſſant labour. They had long enjoyed the ſweets of peace and mutual affection, when

when the reformers of Germany and Geneva ſent miniſters among them; which unhappily laid them open to religious hatred, the moſt unrelenting of all furies. In the year 1540, the parliament of Provence condemned nineteen of them to be burnt for hereſy, their trees to be rooted up, and their houſes to be razed to the ground. The Waldenſes, terrified at this ſentence, applied in a body to Cardinal Sadolet, biſhop of Carpentras; who received them kindly, and obtained from Francis I. of France, a pardon for the perſons under ſentence of death, on condition of abjuring hereſy. The matter lay over five years; when the parliament, irritated at their perſeverance, prevailed on the King to withdraw his pardon. The ſentence was executed with great rigour; and the parliament, laying hold of that opportunity, broke through every reſtraint of law, and commenced a violent perſecution againſt the whole tribe. The ſoldiers began with maſſacring old men, women, and children, all having fled who were able to fly; and proceeded to burn their houſes, barns, and corn. There remained in the town of Cabriere ſixty men and thirty women; who having ſurrendered upon promiſe of life, were butchered all of them without mercy. Some women who had taken refuge in a church, were dragged out and burnt alive. Twenty-two villages were reduced to aſhes; and that populous and flouriſhing diſtrict became once more a deſart.

To conceive this horrid fcene in all its deformity, the people perfecuted ought to be compared with the clergy their perfecutors; for the civil magiftrate was the hand only that executed their vengeance: on the one fide, an induftrious honeft people, pure in their morals, and no lefs pure in their religion: on the other, proud pampered priefts, abandoned without fhame to every wickednefs, impure in their morals, and ftill more impure in their religion—the world never furnifhed fuch another contraft. Had the fcene been reverfed, to make thefe wretches fuffer perfecution from the Waldenfes—but that people were too upright and too religious for being perfecutors. The manners of the Chriftian clergy in general, before the Reformation, enlivens the contraft. The doctrine promulgated during the dark times of Chriftianity, That God is a mercenary being, and that every perfon however wicked may obtain pardon of his fins by money, made riches flow into the hands of the clergy in a plentiful ftream. And riches had the fame effect upon the Chriftian clergy that they have upon all men, which is, to produce pride, fenfuality, and profligacy: thefe again produced diffipation of money, which prompted avarice, and every invention for recruiting exhaufted treafures*. Even as early as the eighth

century,

* In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, many of the clergy became merchants; and, being free of taxes, engroffed all.

In

century, the Chriſtian clergy, tempted by opulence, abandoned themſelves to pleaſure, without moderation; and far exceeded the laity in luxury, gluttony, and luſt. When ſuch were the paſtors, what muſt have been the flock! Rejoice, O Scotland, over the poverty and temperance of thy paſtors. During that period, the clergy could read, and, like parrots, they could mumble prayers in Latin: in every other reſpect, they rivalled the laity in ignorance. They were indeed more cunning than the laity; and underſtood their intereſt better, if to covet riches at the expence of probity, deſerve that name. Three articles were eſtabliſhed that made religion an eaſy ſervice. Firſt, That faith is the eſſence of religion, without regard to good works; and hence the neceſſity of being ſtrictly orthodox, which the church only could determine. Second, Religious worſhip was reduced to a number of external ceremonies and forms, which, being declared ſufficient for ſalvation, abſolved Chriſtians from every moral duty. Remark, that a prieſt is always the chief perſon in ceremonial worſhip. The third article, That God is a mercenary being, is mentioned above, with its neceſſary conſequences. Theſe articles brought about a total neglect, both in clergy and laity, not only of morality, but of every eſſential religious

In the Netherlands particularly, there was a great cry, that monaſteries were converted into ſhops and warehouſes, and the manſions of ſecular prieſts into tap-houſes and inns.

religious duty. In fine, there never was a religion that deviated more from juſt principles, than that profeſſed by Chriſtians during the dark ages. Perſecution reached none but the ſincerely pious and virtuous. What a glorious tolerating ſentiment doth Arnobius * throw out, and what profuſion of blood would have been prevented, had it been adopted by all Chriſtians! "Da veniam, "Rex ſumme, tuos perſequentibus famulos: et "quod tuæ benignitatis eſt proprium, fugientibus "ignoſce tui nominis et religionis cultum. Non "eſt mirum, ſi ignoraris: majoris eſt admirationis, "ſi ſciaris †." The following parable againſt perſecution was communicated to me by Dr Franklin of Philadelphia, a man who makes a figure in the learned world. "And it came to paſs after theſe "things, that Abraham ſat in the door of his "tent, about the going doing down of the ſun. "And behold a man, bent with age, coming from "the way of the wilderneſs leaning on a ſtaff. "And Abraham aroſe, and met him, and ſaid un-"to him, Turn in, I pray thee, and waſh thy feet, "and tarry all night; and thou ſhalt ariſe early

* Lib. 1. Adverſus Gentes.

† "Forgive, Almighty Power, the perſecutors of thy ſer-"vants; and, in the peculiar benevolence of thy nature, par-"don thoſe men whoſe unhappineſs it is to be ſtrangers to "thy name and worſhip. That they ſhould be ignorant of "thy divine nature, is leſs the ſubject of wonder, than that "any finite being ſhould preſume to know thee aright!"

"in the morning, and go on thy way. And the
"man ſaid, Nay; for I will abide under this tree.
"But Abraham preſſed him greatly: ſo he turn-
"ed, and they went into the tent: and Abraham
"baked unleavened bread, and they did eat.
"And when Abraham ſaw that the man bleſſed
"not God, he ſaid unto him, Wherefore doſt thou
"not worſhip the moſt high God, creator of hea-
"ven and earth? And the man anſwered and ſaid,
"I do not worſhip thy God, neither do I call
"upon his name; for I have made to myſelf a god,
"which abideth always in mine houſe, and provi-
"deth me with all things. And Abraham's zeal
"was kindled againſt the man, and he aroſe, and
"fell upon him, and drove him forth with blows,
"into the wilderneſs. And God called unto A-
"braham, ſaying, Abraham, where is the ſtran-
"ger? And Abraham anſwered and ſaid, Lord, he
"would not worſhip thee, neither would he call
"upon thy name; therefore have I driven him
"out from before my face into the wilderneſs.
"And God ſaid, Have I borne with him theſe hun-
"dred ninety and eight years, and nouriſhed him,
"and clothed him, notwithſtanding his rebellion
"againſt me; and couldſt not thou, who art thy-
"ſelf a ſinner, bear with him one night?" The
hiſtorical ſtyle of the Old Teſtament is here finely
imitated; and the moral muſt ſtrike every one
who is not ſunk in ſtupidity and ſuperſtition. Were
it really a chapter of Geneſis, one is apt to think,
that

that perfecution could never have fhown a bare face among Jews or Chriftians. But alas! that is a vain thought. Such a paffage in the Old Teftament, would avail as little againft the rancorous paffions of men, as the following paffages in the New Teftament, though perfecution cannot be condemned in terms more explicit. "Him that "is weak in the faith, receive you, but not to "doubtful difputations. For one believeth that "he may eat all things; another, who is weak, "eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth, defpife "him that eateth not; and let not him which "eateth not, judge him that eateth. Who art "thou that judgeft another man's fervant? to his "own mafter he ftandeth or falleth. One man "efteemeth one day above another; another e-"fteemeth every day alike. Let every man be "fully perfuaded in his own mind. But why doft "thou judge thy brother? or why doft thou fet "at nought thy brother? for we fhall all ftand "before the judgment-feat of Chrift, every one "to give an account of himfelf to God. I know, "that there is nothing unclean of itfelf: but to "him that efteemeth any thing unclean, to him it "is unclean. The kingdom of God is not meat "and drink, but righteoufnefs and peace, and joy "in the Holy Ghoft. Let us therefore follow af-"ter the things which make for peace, and things "wherewith one may edify another *." Our Sa-

* Epiftle of Paul to the Romans, chap. xiv.

viour himſelf declared againſt perſecution in the moſt expreſs terms. The Jews and Samaritans were of the ſame religion; but ſome trivial differences in the ceremonial part of worſhip, rendered them odious to each other. Our Saviour being refuſed lodging in a village of Samaria, becauſe he was travelling to Jeruſalem, his diſciples James and John ſaid, "Lord, wilt thou that we "command fire to come down from heaven, and "conſume them, even as Elias did? But he "rebuked them, and ſaid, The Son of Man is "not come to deſtroy mens' lives, but to ſave "them * †."

It gives me real concern, that even the hot fire of perſecution did not altogether purify our Reformed clergy from that ſatanical ſpirit. No ſooner were the Diſſenters ſettled in New England, where they fled to avoid perſecution, than they ſet on foot a perſecution againſt the Quakers, no leſs furious

* Luke ix. 54.

† Toleration in religion, though obvious to common underſtanding, was not however the production of reaſon, but of commerce. The advantage of toleration for promoting commerce, was early diſcovered by the Portugueze. They were too zealous Catholics to think of ſo bold a meaſure in Portugal; but it was permitted in Goa, and the inquiſition in that town was confined to Roman Catholics. There is a ſingular example of toleration in the Knights of Malta. That fraternity was inſtituted to make perpetual war againſt the Turks; and yet of late years they have erected a moſque for their Turkiſh priſoners.

furious than what they themſelves had ſuffered at home. Nor did the Reformed clergy in Scotland loſe ſight of the ſame magiſterial authority that had been aſſumed by their predeceſſors of the Romiſh church, on the ridiculous pretext of being ambaſſadors to men from Jeſus Chriſt. Upon a repreſentation, anno 1646, from the commiſſion of the kirk of Scotland, James Bell and Colin Campbell, bailies of Glaſgow, were committed to priſon by the parliament, merely for having ſaid, that kirkmen meddled too much in civil matters. Could a deſpotic prince have exerted a more arbitrary act? but the church was all-powerful in thoſe days*.

* The Chriſtian religion is eminent for a ſpirit of meekneſs, toleration, and brotherly love; and yet perſecution never raged ſo furiouſly in any other religion. Such oppoſition between practice and principle, is a ſingular phenomenon in the hiſtory of man. Let us try to account for it. In the Pagan religion, I diſcover few traces of perſecution. Tutelar deities were univerſal; and, far from impoſing theſe deities on others, every nation valued itſelf on being the only favourite of its own deity. Prieſts by profeſſion have ever been ambitious of impoſing on the laity peculiar forms of worſhip and peculiar religious tenets; but the Greeks and Romans had none ſuch. The Jews had prieſts by profeſſion; and they were beſide a gloomy people naturally inclined to perſecution: they hated their neighbours, and were hated by them. The Mahometan religion was ſown in a fertile ſoil. The Arabians were warlike; but ignorant and eaſily deluded by a warm imagination.

I would do justice to every church, not excepting that of Rome; and it is doing that church no more

imagination. The Koran is finely contrived to impose upon such a people. The ambition of Mahomet corresponded to the warlike genius of his countrymen; who were taught to convert all men to his religion, by the simple but effectual argument of fire and sword. This spirit of persecution accompanied that of conquest. The latter is now extinguished by luxury and sensuality; and there scarce remains any vestige of the former.

Among an illiterate and credulous people, directed by the light of nature to worship the Deity, but without any established form, every innovation is peaceably and cordially admitted. When Christianity was introduced into Britain, the Druids, as appears from Ossian, had lost all authority. The people were prepared for the new religion; and there could be no persecution where there was none to oppose. Upon that plain people, the Christian religion had its genuine effect: it softened their manners, and produced a spirit of meekness and brotherly love. Never was practice more concordant with principle. The scene is very different where a new religion is introduced in opposition to one long established. Zeal for a new religion inflames its converts; and as violent passions are infectious, those who adhere to the established worship are by degrees equally inflamed. Mutual hatred and persecution are the never-failing consequences. This was the case in the countries where the Christian religion was first promulgated.

When that religion began to make a figure, the Roman empire was finely prepared for its reception. The fables of Paganism, which pass current as important truths in days of ignorance, were now exploded as childish and ridiculous. The despotism

more but juſtice to acknowledge, that the ſpirit of perſecution was not more eminent in it, than zeal for

deſpotiſm of the Roman government, and ſucceſſive irruptions of barbarians, had ſunk the Roman people, had filled them with ſuperſtitious terrors, and diſpoſed them to embrace any religion that promiſed happineſs either here or in another world. Luckily, the new religion was that of Jeſus Chriſt. The meek ſpirit of the goſpel would in time have prevailed over a religion that was groſsly idolatrous; but, unhappily, the zeal of the new converts, and their abhorrence of idolatry, was not confined to argument, but was vented with all the violence of religious hatred. Here, the Man got the better of the Chriſtian. Thoſe of the eſtabliſhed religion became equally violent, through the infection of paſſion; and mutual perſecution knew no bounds.

This appears to be a fair account of the mutual perſecution between Chriſtians and Pagans. But perſecution did not ſtop there; it raged among different ſects of Chriſtians no leſs than formerly againſt the common enemy. This requires to be accounted for. Acuteneſs and ſubtility formed the character of the Greeks. Every man eminent for learning had his followers: in philoſophy many ſects were formed, and much diſputation and wrangling enſued. The Chriſtian religion was early introduced into Greece; and its votaries were infected with the ſpirit of the nation; the ſlighteſt differences occaſioned diſputes; and ſects were formed upon the ſlighteſt differences. In the goſpel, eternal happineſs is promiſed to thoſe who believe in Jeſus Chriſt. The true ſenſe was perverted by the bulk of Chriſtians; and ſalvation was annexed to the mere act of belief, without regard to good works. Men are prone to ſuch a doctrine: they conceive belief to be an eaſy matter, as it puts no reſtraint upon their paſſions: they are extremely willing to believe, provided they be left free to act as they pleaſe.

for making converts. The former is retiring out of the world; and I wish it most profound rest, never

please. Thus as the whole of religion was understood to rest upon belief, the most minute differences in belief, became of the highest importance. That Christ was a divine person sent by God to correct and reform mankind, is the belief of the Arians. This is not believing in Christ, say the orthodox. "You must believe, that he is the Son of God, and equal to "the Father." This was a capital dispute. But the spirit of disputation did not rest there; every trifle was made a subject of wrangling; and hence persecution without end. Violent passions were thus encouraged among Christians; and even the most unmanly vices were meritorious to promote the interest of one sect against another. It became a maxim, that ill may be done in order to bring about good; and accordingly every deceit was put in practice by clergymen, not excepting forgery, in support of their own sect. Such practices were common as early as the third century. The persecuting spirit continues in vigour among the Roman Catholics, against those who deny the infallibility of their sovereign pontiff. It is high treason to disregard his authority; and rebels are persecuted with fire and sword in this world, and with eternal damnation in the next. No sooner had Protestants renounced the Papal authority, than they gave vent to persecution against one another. America was the refuge of many dissenters from the Church of England, to avoid persecution at home. But scarce were they established there, when they raised a violent persecution against Quakers, the most innocuous of all sects.

Zeal for a new religion is immoderate. It cools gradually, and at last vanishes where that religion has been long established, and is peaceably submitted to. Then it is, that a salutary truth is discovered, That people of different religions, may

never again to awake. People begin to be aſhamed of it, as of a garment long out of faſhion. Let the other continue for amuſement: it is innocent; and if it do no good, it is not productive of ſo much harm.

The deſire of making converts proceeds from two different cauſes. In ſuperſtitious zealots, it proceeds from an opinion, that all who differ from them are in the road to damnation: for which reaſon, there is a rage of making converts among Roman Catholics; who, without ceremony, deliver over to the flames of hell, every perſon who is not of their communion. The other cauſe is more natural: every man thinks himſelf in the right, eſpecially in matters of conſequence; and, for that reaſon, he is happy to find others of his opinion *. With reſpect to the firſt cauſe, I beg attention to the following conſiderations; not with any hope of converting zealots, but to prevent, if poſſible,

nay even of different ſects, may live peaceably together. In England and Holland, men are permitted to worſhip God their own way, provided they give no diſturbance to ſociety. Holland has given to mankind a glorious example, not only of univerſal toleration, but of permitting men, without regard to difference of religion, to enjoy all the privileges of a citizen. Even the Jews in Surinam are admitted to bear a part in the government. And that laudable example is copied by Britain with reſpect to the Roman Catholics in the iſland Grenade.

* Elements of Criticiſm, vol. ii. p. 493. edit. 5.

poffible, others from becoming fuch. In none of the works of God is variety more happily blended with uniformity, than in the formation of man. Uniformity prevails in the human face with refpect to eyes, nofe, mouth, and other capital parts: variety prevails in the expreffions of thefe parts, ferving to diftinguifh one perfon from another, without hazard of error. In like manner, the minds of men are uniform with refpect to their paffions and principles; but the various tones and expreffions of thefe, form different characters without end. A face deftitute of a nofe or of a mouth, is monftrous: a mind deftitute of the moral fenfe, or of a fenfe of religion, is no lefs fo. But variety of expreffion in different faces is agreeable, becaufe we relifh variety; and a fimilar variety in the expreffions or tones of paffion, ought to be equally agreeable. Endlefs differences in temper, in tafte, and in mental faculties, that of reafon in particular, produce neceffarily variety in fentiment and in opinion. Can God be difpleafed with fuch variety, when it is his own work? He requires no uniformity, except with refpect to an upright mind and clear confcience, which are indifpenfable. Here at the fame time is difcovered an illuftrious final caufe. Different countenances in the human race, not only diftinguifh one perfon from another, but promote fociety, by aiding us to chufe a friend, an affociate, a partner for life. Differences in opinion and fentiment have ftill more

more beneficial effects: they rouſe the attention, give exerciſe to the underſtanding, and ſharpen the reaſoning faculty. With reſpect to religion in particular, perfect uniformity, which furniſheth no ſubject for thinking nor for reaſoning, would produce languor in divine worſhip, and make us ſink into cold indifference. How fooliſh then is the rage of making proſelytes? Let every man enjoy his native liberty, of thinking as well as of acting; free to act as he pleaſes, provided only he obey the rules of morality; equally free to think as he pleaſes, provided only he acknowledge the Great God as his maker and maſter, and perceive the neceſſary connection of religion with morality. Strict uniformity in other matters, may be compared to a ſpring-day, calm and ſerene; neither ſo hot as to make us drop a garment, nor ſo cold as to require an addition; no wind to ruffle, nor rain to make ſhelter neceſſary. We enjoy the ſweet ſcene for a moment: we walk, we ſit, we muſe—but ſoon fall aſleep. Agitation is the element of man, and the life of ſociety. Let us not attempt to correct the works of God: the attempt will betray us into abſurd errors. This doctrine cannot be better illuſtrated than by a converſation, reported by the Jeſuit Tachard, between the King of Siam, and a French ambaſſador, who, in his maſter's name, urged that king to embrace the Chriſtian religion. "I am ſurpriſed," ſaid his Majeſty of Siam, "that the King of France, my "good

" good friend, ſhould intereſt himſelf ſo warmly
" in what concerns God only. He hath given to
" his creatures different minds and different in-
" clinations, which naturally lead them to differ
" in opinion. We admire variety in the material
" world: why not equally admire it in matters of
" religion? Have we not then reaſon to believe,
" that God takes pleaſure in all the different forms
" of worſhip? Had it been the intention of God,
" to produce uniformity in religion, he would have
" formed all men with the ſame mind." Bernier
introduces ſome Gentiles of Hindoſtan defending
their religion much in the ſame manner: " That
" they did not pretend their law to be univerſal;
" that they did not hold ours to be falſe, as, for
" ought they knew, it might be a good law for
" us; and that God probably made many roads to
" heaven."

With reſpect to the other cauſe above mentioned, the deſire of putting people in the right road. To reaſon others into our religious principles, is natural; but it is not always prudent. I wiſh my neighbour to be of my opinion, becauſe I think my opinion right: but is there no danger of undermining his religious principles, without eſtabliſhing better in their ſtead? Ought I not to reſtrain my deſire of making converts, when the attempt may poſſibly reduce them to abandon religion altogether, as a matter of utter uncertainty? If a man of clear underſtanding has, by

ſome unhappy means, been led into error, that man may be ſet right by fair reaſoning: but beware of endeavouring to convert people of low parts, who are indebted for their creed to parents, to education, or to example: it is ſafer to let them reſt as they are.

At any rate, let us never attempt to gain proſelytes by rewards, or by terror: what other effect can ſuch motives produce, but diſſimulation and lying, parents of every ſecret crime. The Empreſs of Ruſſia uſes a method for converting her Pagan ſubjects of Kamſkatka, no leſs agreeable than effectual; which is, to exempt from taxes for ten years, ſuch of them as profeſs the Chriſtian religion. This practice may be political; but it tends not to advance religion, and is deſtructive of morality. Terror, on the other hand, may be equally effectual, but is not altogether ſo agreeable. The people of Rum, one of the Hebrides, were Papiſts till the beginning of the preſent century, when in one day they were all proſelyted to the Proteſtant faith. Maclean of Coll, their chieftain, went to the iſland with a Proteſtant miniſter, and ordered all the inhabitants to appear on Sunday at public worſhip. They came, but refuſed to hear a Proteſtant miniſter. The chieftain reaſoned with them: but finding that his reaſonings made no impreſſion, he laid hold of the moſt forward; and having made a deep impreſſion on him with his cane,

cane, pushed him into the church. The rest followed like meek lambs; and from that day have continued firm Protestants. The Protestantism of Rum is styled by their Popish neighbours the faith of the *yellow stick*.

To apply any means for making proselytes, other than fair reasoning, appears to me a strange perversion. Can God be pleased with using rewards or punishments, or can any rational man justify them? What then should move any one to put them in practice? I should be utterly at a loss to answer the question, but for a fact mentioned more than once above, that the rude and illiterate judge by sight only, not by reflection. They lay weight on the external visible act, without thinking of intention, which is not visible. In truth, the bulk of mankind rest upon the external profession of religion: they never think of the heart, nor consider how that stands affected. What else is it but the external act merely that moves the Romish missionaries to baptize the infants of savages even at the moment of expiring? which they prosecute with much pious ardour. Their zeal merits applause, but not their judgment. Can any rational person seriously believe, that the dipping a savage or an infant in water will make either of them a Christian, or that the want of this ceremony will precipitate them into hell? The Lithuanians, before their conversion to Christianity,

ſtianity, worſhipped ſerpents, every family entertaining one as a houſehold-god. Sigiſmundus, in his commentaries of Muſcovy, reports the following incident. A converted Chriſtian having perſuaded a neighbour to follow his example, and, in token of his converſion, to kill his ſerpent, was ſurpriſed, at his next viſit, to find his convert in the deepeſt melancholy, bitterly lamenting that he had murdered his god, and that the moſt dreadful calamities would befal him. Was this perſon a Chriſtian more than nominally? At the end of the laſt century, when Kempfer was in Japan, there remained but about fifty Japan Chriſtians, who were locked up in priſon for life. Theſe poor people knew no more of the Chriſtian religion, but the names of our Saviour and of the Virgin Mary; and yet ſo zealous Chriſtians were they, as rather to die miſerably in jail, than to renounce the name of Chriſt, and be ſet at liberty. The inhabitants of the iſland Annaboa, in the gulf of Guinea, have been converted by the Portugueſe to Chriſtianity. No more is required of them, as Boſman obſerves, but to repeat a *Pater Noſter*, and *Ave Maria*, confeſs to the prieſt, and bring offerings to him.

I cannot with ſatisfaction conclude this Sketch, without congratulating my preſent countrymen of Britain upon their knowledge of the intimate connection that true religion has with morality.

May the importance of that connection, always at heart, excite us to govern every action of our lives by the united principles of morality and religion :——what a happy people would we be !

APPEN-

APPENDIX.

SKETCHES

CONCERNING

SCOTLAND.

SKETCH I.

SCOTCH ENTAILS CONSIDERED IN MORAL AND POLITICAL VIEWS.

MAN is by nature a hoarding animal; and to ſecure what is acquired by honeſt induſtry, the ſenſe of property is made a branch of human nature *. During the infancy of nations, when artificial wants are unknown, the hoarding appetite makes no figure. The uſe of money produced a great alteration in the human heart. Money having at command the goods of fortune, introduced inequality of rank, luxury, and artificial wants without end. No bounds are ſet to hoarding, where an appetite for artificial wants is indul-

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* Book I. Sketch 2.

ged: love of money becomes the ruling paſſion: it is coveted by many, in order to be hoarded; and means are abſurdly converted into an end.

The ſenſe of property, weak among ſavages, ripens gradually till it arrives at maturity in poliſhed nations. In every ſtage of the progreſs, ſome new power is added to property; and now, for centuries, men have enjoyed every power over their own goods, that a rational mind can deſire *: they have the free diſpoſal during life, and even after death, by naming an heir. Theſe powers are ſufficient for accompliſhing every rational purpoſe: they are ſufficient for commerce, and they are ſufficient for benevolence. But the artificial wants of men are boundleſs: not content with the full enjoyment of their property during life, nor with the proſpect of its being enjoyed by a favourite heir, they are anxiouſly bent to preſerve it to themſelves for ever. A man who has amaſſed a great eſtate in land, is miſerable at the proſpect of being obliged to quit his hold: to ſoothe his diſeaſed fancy, he makes a deed ſecuring it for ever to certain heirs; who muſt without end bear his name, and preſerve his eſtate entire. Death, it is true, muſt at laſt ſeparate him from his idol: it is ſome conſolation, however, that his will governs and gives law to every ſubſequent proprietor. How repugnant to the frail ſtate of man are ſuch ſwollen conceptions! Upon theſe, however, are founded

* Hiſtorical Law-Tracts, Tract 3.

ed entails, which have prevailed in many parts of the world, and unhappily at this day infeſt Scotland. Did entails produce no other miſchief but the gratification of a diſtempered appetite, they might be endured, though far from deſerving approbation: but, like other tranſgreſſions of nature and reaſon, they are productive of much miſchief, not only to commerce, but to the very heirs for whoſe ſake alone it is pretended that they are made.

Conſidering that the law of nature has beſtowed on man every power of property that is neceſſary either for commerce or for benevolence, how blind was it in the Engliſh Legiſlature to add a moſt irrational power, that of making an entail! But men will always be mending; and, when a lawgiver ventures to tamper with the laws of nature, he hazards much miſchief. We have a pregnant inſtance above, of an attempt to mend the laws of God in many abſurd regulations for the poor; and that the law authoriſing entails is another inſtance of the ſame kind, will be evident from what follows.

The miſchievous effects of Engliſh entails were ſoon diſcovered: they occaſioned ſuch injuſtice and oppreſſion, that even the judges ventured to relieve the nation from them by an artificial form, termed *fine and recovery*. And yet, though no moderate man would deſire more power over his eſtate than he has by common law, the legiſlature of Scotland enabled every land-proprietor to fet-

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ter his eſtate for ever ; to tyrannize over his heirs ; and to reduce their property to a ſhadow, by prohibiting them to alien, and by prohibiting them to contract debt, were it even to redeem them from death or ſlavery. Thus, many a man, fonder of his eſtate than of his wife and children, grudges the uſe of it to his natural heirs, reducing them to the ſtate of mere liferenters. Behold the conſequences! A number of noblemen and gentlemen among us lie in wait for every parcel of land that comes to market. Intent upon aggrandizing their family, or rather their eſtate, which is the favourite object, they ſecure every purchaſe by an entail; and the ſame courſe will be followed, till no land be left to be purchaſed. Thus every entailed eſtate in Scotland becomes in effect a mortmain, admitting additions without end, but abſolutely barring alienation; and if the Legiſlature interpoſe not, the period is not diſtant, when all the land in Scotland will be locked up by entails, and withdrawn from commerce.

The purpoſe of the preſent Eſſay, is to ſet before our Legiſlature, coolly and impartially, the deſtructive effects of a Scotch entail. I am not ſo ſanguine as to hope, that men, who convert means into an end, and avariciouſly covet land for its own ſake, will be prevailed upon to regard, either the intereſt of their country, or of their poſterity: but I would gladly hope, that the Legiſlature may

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be roufed to give attention to a national object of no flight importance.

I begin with effects of a private or domeftic nature. To the poffeffor, an entail is a conftant fource of difcontent, by fubverting that liberty and independence, which all men covet with refpect to their goods as well as their perfons. What can be more vexatious to a proprietor of a great land-eftate, than to be barred from the moft laudable acts, fuitable provifions, for example, to a wife or children? not to mention numberlefs acts of benevolence, that endear individuals to each other, and fweeten fociety. A great proportion of the land in Scotland is in fuch a ftate, that, by laying out a thoufand pounds or fo, an intelligent proprietor may add a hundred pounds yearly to his rent-roll. But an entail effectually bars that improvement: it affords the proprietor no credit; and fuppofing him to have the command of money independent of the eftate, he will be ill-fated if he have not means to employ it more profitably for his own intereft. An entail, at the fame time, is no better than a trap for an improvident poffeffor: to avoid altogether the contracting debt, is impracticable; and if a young man be guided more by pleafure than by prudence, which commonly is the cafe of young men, a vigilant and rapacious fubftitute, taking advantage of a forfeiting claufe, turns him out of poffeffion, and delivers him over to want and mifery.

I beg indulgence for introducing a cafe, which, though particular, may frequently happen. A gentleman, who has a family-feat finely fituated, but in the ftate of nature, is tempted to lay out great fums upon improvements and embellifhments, having a numerous iffue to benefit by his operations. They all fail; and a ftranger, perhaps his enemy, becomes the heir of entail. Fond, however, of his darling feat, he is willing to preferve all entire, upon procuring to his heirs a reafonable fum for his improvements; which is refufed. Averfe to lay wafte the work of his own hands, he reftricts his demand to the real value of the growing timber—All in vain. Provoked at the obftinacy of the heir of entail, he cuts down every tree, difmantles the place; and with a fad heart abandons his beloved habitation. In a bare country like Scotland, is it not cruel to deter proprietors by an entail, from improving their land, and embellifhing their family-feats? Is it not ftill more cruel, to force a proprietor, who has no heir of his own blood, to lay all wafte, inftead of leaving behind him a monument of his tafte and induftry?

But an entail is productive of confequences ftill more difmal, even with refpect to heirs. A young man upon whom the family-eftate is entailed without any power referved to the father, is not commonly obfequious to advice, nor patiently fubmiffive to the fatigues of education: he abandons him-

felf

ſelf to pleaſure, and indulges his paſſions without controul. In one word, there is no ſituation more ſubverſive of morals, than that of a young man, bred up from infancy in the certainty of inheriting an opulent fortune.

The condition of the other children, daughters eſpecially, is commonly deplorable. The proprietor of a large entailed eſtate leaves at his death children who have acquired a taſte for ſumptuous living. The ſons drop off one by one, and a number of daughters remain, with a ſcanty proviſion, or perhaps with none at all. A collateral male heir ſucceeds, who, after a painful ſearch, is diſcovered in ſome remote corner, qualified to procure bread by the ſpade or the plough, but entirely unqualified for behaving as maſter of an opulent fortune. By ſuch a metamorphoſis, the poor man makes a ludicrous figure; while the daughters, reduced to indigence, are in a ſituation much more lamentable than are the brats of beggars.

Our entails produce another domeſtic evil, for which no proper remedy is provided. The ſums permitted in moſt entails to younger children, however adequate when the entail is made, become in time too ſcanty, by a fall in the value of money, and by increaſe of luxury; which is peculiarly hard upon daughters of great families: the proviſions deſtined for them will not afford them bread; and they cannot hope to be ſuitably matched, without

out a decent fortune. If we adhere to entails, nunneries ought to be provided.

But the domeſtic evils of an entail make no figure, compared with thoſe that reſpect the public. Theſe in their full extent would fill a volume: they are well known; and it may be ſufficient to keep them in view by ſome ſlight hints.

As obſerved above, few tenants in tail can command money for improvements, however profitable. Such diſcouragement to agriculture, hurtful to proprietors of entailed eſtates, is ſtill more ſo to the public. It is now an eſtabliſhed maxim, That a ſtate is powerful in proportion to the product of its land: a nation that feeds its neighbours, can ſtarve them. The quantity of land that is locked up in Scotland by entails, has damped the growing ſpirit of agriculture. There is not produced ſufficiency of corn at home for our own conſumpt: and our condition will become worſe and worſe by new entails, till agriculture and induſtry be annihilated. Were the great entailed eſtates in Scotland ſplit into ſmall properties of fifty or a hundred pounds yearly rent, we ſhould ſoon be enabled, not only to ſupply our own markets, but to ſpare for our neighbours.

In the next place, our entails are no leſs ſubverſive of commerce than of agriculture. There are numberleſs land eſtates in Scotland of one, two, or three hundred pounds yearly rent. Such an eſtate cannot afford bare neceſſaries to the proprietor, if

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he pretend to live like a gentleman. But he has an excellent reſource: let him apply to any branch of trade, his eſtate will afford him credit for what money he wants. The profit he makes, pays the intereſt of the money borrowed, with a ſurplus; and this ſurplus, added to the rent of his eſtate, enables him to live comfortably. A number of land-proprietors in ſuch circumſtances, would advance commerce to a great height. But alas! there are not many who have that reſource: ſuch is the itch in Scotland for entailing, as even to deſcend lower than one hundred pounds yearly. Can one behold with patience, the countenance that is given to ſelfiſh wrong-headed people, acting in direct oppoſition to the proſperity of their country? Commerce is no leſs hurt in another reſpect: when our land is withdrawn from commerce by entails, every proſperous trader will deſert a country where he can find no land to purchaſe; for to raiſe a family, by acquiring an eſtate in land, is the ultimate aim of every merchant, and of every man who accumulates money.

Thirdly, An entail is a bitter enemy to population. Population depends greatly on the number of land-proprietors. A very ſmall portion of land, managed with ſkill and induſtry, affords bread to a numerous family; and the great aim of the frugal proprietor, is to provide a fund for educating his children, and for eſtabliſhing them in buſineſs. A numerous iſſue, at the ſame time, is commonly the

the lot of the temperate and frugal; becaufe luxury and voluptuoufnefs enervate the body, and dry up the fources of procreation. This is no chimera or fond imagination: traverfe Europe; compare great capitals with diftant provinces, and it will be found to hold univerfally, that children abound much more among the induftrious poor, than among the luxurious rich. But, if divifion of land into fmall properties, tend to population; depopulation muft be the neceffary confequence of an entail, the avowed intent of which is to unite many fmall properties in one great eftate; and confequently to reduce land-proprietors to a fmall number.

Let us, in the fourth place, take under confideration the children of landholders with refpect to education and induftry; for, unlefs men be ufefully employed, population is of no real advantage to a ftate. In that refpect, great and fmall eftates admit no comparifon. Children of great families, accuftomed to affluence and luxury, are too proud for bufinefs; and, were they even willing, are incapable to drudge at a laborious employment. At the fame time, the father's hands being tied up by his entail from affording them fuitable provifions, they become a burden on the family, and on the ftate, and can do no fervice to either, but by dying. Yet there are men fo blind, or fo callous, as to be fond of entails. Let us try whether a more pleafing fcene will

have

have any effect upon them. Children of fmall landholders are from infancy educated in a frugal manner; and they muft be induftrious, as they depend on induftry for bread. Among that clafs of men, education has its moft powerful influence: and upon that clafs a nation chiefly relies, for its fkilful artifts and manufacturers, for its lawyers, phyficians, divines, and even for its generals and ftatefmen.

And this leads to confider, in the fifth place, the influence that great and fmall eftates have on manners. Gentlemen of a moderate fortune, connected with their fuperiors and inferiors, improve fociety, by fpreading kindly affection through the whole members of the ftate. In fuch only refides the genuine fpirit of liberty, abhorrent equally of fervility to fuperiors, and of tyranny to inferiors. The nature of the Britifh government creates a mutual dependance of the great and fmall on each other. The great have favours to beftow: the fmall have many more, by their privilege of electing parliament-men; which obliges men of high rank to affect popularity, however little feeling they may have for the good of their fellow-creatures. This connection produces good manners at leaft, between different ranks, and perhaps fome degree of cordiality. Accumulation of land into great eftates, produces oppofite manners: when all the land in Scotland is fwallowed up by a number of grandees, and a few gentlemen of the middle

middle rank are left; even the appearance of popularity will vaniſh, leaving pride and inſolence on the one hand, and abject ſervility on the other. In a word, the diſtribution of land into many ſhares, accords charmingly with the free ſpirit of the Britiſh conſtitution; but nothing is more repugnant to that ſpirit, than overgrown eſtates in land.

In the ſixth place, Arts and ſciences can never flouriſh in a country, where all the land is engroſſed by a few. Science will never be cultivated by the diſpirited tenant, who can ſcarce procure bread; and ſtill leſs, if poſſible, by the inſolent landlord, who is too ſelf-ſufficient for inſtruction. There will be no encouragement for arts: great and opulent proprietors, foſtering ambitious views, will cling to the ſeat of government, which is far removed from Scotland; and if vanity make them ſometimes diſplay their grandeur at their country-ſeats, they will be too delicate for any articles of luxury but what are foreign. The arts and ſciences being thus baniſhed, Scotland will be deſerted by every man of ſpirit who can find bread elſewhere.

In the ſeventh place, Such overgrown eſtates will produce an irregular and dangerous influence with reſpect to the Houſe of Commons. The Parliament-boroughs will be ſubdued by weight of money; and, with reſpect to county-elections, it is a chance if there be left in a county as many qualified

qualified landholders as to afford a free choice. In ſuch circumſtances, will our conſtitution be in no danger from the ambitious views of men elevated above others by their vaſt poſſeſſions? Is it unlikely, that ſuch men, taking advantage of public diſcord, will become an united body of ambitious oppreſſors, overawing their Sovereign as well as their fellow-ſubjects? Such was the miſerable condition of Britain, while the feudal oligarchy ſubſiſted: ſuch at preſent is the miſerable condition of Poland: and ſuch will be the miſerable condition of Scotland, if the Legiſlature do not ſtretch out a ſaving hand.

If the public intereſt only were to be regarded, entails ought to be deſtroyed root and branch. But a numberleſs body of ſubſtitutes are intereſted, many of whom would be diſinherited, if the tenants in tail had power. To reconcile as much as poſſible theſe oppoſite intereſts, it is propoſed that the following articles be authoriſed by a ſtatute. Firſt, That the act of Parliament 1685 be repealed with reſpect to all future operations. Second, That entails already made and completed, ſhall continue effectual to ſuch ſubſtitutes as exiſt at the date of the act propoſed; but ſhall not benefit any ſubſtitute born after it. Third, That power be reſerved to every proprietor, after the act 1685 is at an end, to ſettle his eſtate upon what heirs he thinks proper, and to bar theſe heirs from altering

altering the order of fucceffion; thefe powers being inherent in property at common law.

At the fame time, the prohibiting entails will avail little, if truft-deeds be permitted in their utmoft extent, as in England. And therefore, in order to re-eftablifh the law of nature with refpect to land-property, a limitation of truft-deeds is neceffary. My propofal is, That no truft-deed, directing or limiting the fucceffion of heirs to a land-eftate, fhall be effectual beyond the life of the heirs in exiftence at the time.

SKETCH II.

GOVERNMENT OF ROYAL BOROUGHS IN SCOTLAND.

BY a royal borough is in Scotland underftood, an incorporation that hold their lands of the Crown, and are governed by magiftrates of their own naming. The adminiftration of the annual revenues of a royal borough, termed the *common good*, is trufted to the magiftrates; but not without controul. It was originally fubjected to the review of the Great Chamberlain; and accordingly the chap. 39. § 45. of the *Iter Camerarii*, contains

contains the following articles, recommended to the Chamberlain, to be inquired into. "Giff "there be an good affedation and uptaking of the "common good of the burgh, and giff faithful "compt be made thereof to the community of "the burgh ; and giff no compt is made, he "whom and in quhaes hands it is come, and how "it paffes by the community." In purfuance of thefe inftructions, the Chamberlain's precepts for holding the ayr, or circuit, is directed to the provoft and bailies, enjoining them "to call all thofe "who have received any of the town's revenues, "or ufed any office within the burgh, fince the "laft chamberlain-ayr, to anfwer fuch things as "fhall be laid to their charge." *Iter Camer. cap.* I. And in the third chapter, which contains the forms of the chamberlain-ayr, the firft thing to be done after fencing the court, is, to call the bailies and ferjeants to be challenged and accufed from the time of the laft ayr.

This office, dangerous by excefs of power, being fuppreffed, the royal boroughs were left in a ftate of anarchy. There being now no check or controul, the magiftracy was coveted by noblemen and gentlemen in the neighbourhood; who, under the name of office-bearers, laid their hands on the revenues of the borough, and converted all to their own profit. This corruption was heavily complained of in the reign of James V.; and a remedy was provided by act 26. Parl. 1535, en-

 acting,

acting, 1ſt, That none be qualified to be provoſt, bailie, or alderman, but an indwelling burgeſs. 2dly, "That no inhabitant purchaſe lordſhip out "of burgh, to the terror of his comburgeſſes, "And, 3dly, That all provoſts, bailies, and alder-"men of boroughs, bring yearly to the chequer, "at a day certain, the compt-books of their com-"mon good, to be ſeen and conſidered by the "Lords Auditors, giff the ſame be ſpended for "the common well of the burgh, or not, under "the penalty of loſing their freedom. And that "the ſaids provoſts, bailies, and aldermen, warn "yearly, fifteen days before their coming to the "chequer, all thoſe who are willing to come for "examining the ſaid accounts, that they may im-"pugn the ſame, in order that all murmur may "ceaſe in that behalf." And to enforce theſe regulations, a brieve was iſſued from the chancery, commanding the magiſtrates to preſent their accounts to the Exchequer, and ſummoning the burgeſſes to appear and object to the ſame.

A defect in this ſtatute made it leſs effectual than it was intended to be. Magiſtrates, to avoid the penalty, brought the count-books of their common-good to the Exchequer; but they brought no rental of the common-good to found a charge againſt them. This defect was remedied by act 28. Parl. 1693, containing the following preamble. "That the royal boroughs, by the mal-admini-"ſtration of their magiſtrates, have fallen under

"great

" great debts and burdens, to the diminution of
" their dignity, and the difabling of them to ferve
" the crown and government as they ought; and
" that the care, overfight, and controul, of the
" common-good of boroughs, belong to their
" Majefties by virtue of their prerogative-royal;
" therefore, for preventing the like abufes and
" mifapplications in all time thereafter, their
" Majefties ftatute and ordain, That every burgh-
" royal fhall, betwixt and the firft day of No-
" vember next, bring to the Lords of Treafury
" and Exchequer an exact account of charge and
" difcharge, fubfcribed by the magiftrates and
" town-clerk, of their whole public-good and
" revenues, and of the whole debts and incum-
" brances that affect the fame." This completed the remedy, by purting means into the hands of the Barons of Exchequer to controul the accounts enjoined by the former ftatute to be yearly given in.

The foregoing regulations are kept in obfervance. Every year a precept iffues from the Exchequer, figned by one of the Barons, addreffed to the director of the chancery, requiring him to make out a brieve for every royal borough. The brieve is accordingly made out, returned to the Exchequer, and fent to the feveral fheriffs, to be ferved in all the royal boroughs within their bounds, as directed by the ftatute. Thefe brieves are accordingly fo ferved by the fheriffs; and particu-

larly it is a conſtant form in moſt of the royal boroughs, to iſſue a proclamation, fifteen days before the day named for appearance in Exchequer, warning the inhabitants to repair there, in order to object to the public accounts of the town: and further, in order to give them opportunity to frame objections, the book and counts are laid open for theſe fifteen days, to be inſpected by all the inhabitants.

We learn from the records of Exchequer, that, from the year 1660 to the year 1683, accounts were regularly given in to Exchequer, in obedience to the ſtatute. The town of Edinburgh only having failed for ſome ſhort time, Captain Thomas Hamilton, merchant there, by an action in Exchequer, compelled the magiſtrates to produce upon oath their treaſurer's accounts, which were accordingly audited. And we alſo learn, that, from the Reſtoration down to the Union, a clerk to the borough-roll was appointed by the crown, whoſe proper buſineſs it was to examine and audite the accounts of the boroughs.

Notwithſtanding the foregoing ſalutary regulations, and the form conſtantly practiſed to make them effectual, the boroughs of late years have forborn to preſent their accounts in Exchequer; hoping that they would be overlooked by the Engliſh court of Exchequer, eſtabliſhed in Scotland after the Union; which accordingly happened. This neglect in the Court of Exchequer is greatly

greatly to be regretted, becauſe it reduces the royal boroughs, by the mal-adminiſtration of their magiſtrates, to the ſame miſerable condition that is ſo loudly complained of in the ſtatutes above mentioned. It is undoubtedly in the power of the Barons to reſtore good government to the boroughs, by compelling the magiſtrates to account yearly in the court of Exchequer, according to the foregoing regulations: no more is neceſſary, but to ſignify publicly that they are reſolved to put theſe regulations in execution.

How beneficial that ſtep would be to this country in general, and to the royal boroughs in particular, will appear from conſidering, firſt, the unhappy conſequences that reſult from ſuffering magiſtrates to diſpoſe of the town's revenues, without any check or controul; and next, the good effects that muſt reſult from a regular and careful management, under the inſpection of the King's judges.

The unhappy conſequences of leaving magiſtrates without any check or controul, are too viſible to be diſguiſed. The revenues of a royal borough are ſeldom laid out for the good of the town, but in making friends to the party who are in poſſeſſion of the magiſtracy; and in rioting and drunkenneſs, for which every pretext is laid hold of, particularly that of hoſpitality to ſtrangers. Such miſmanagement tends to idleneſs, and corruption of manners; which accordingly are re-

markable in moft royal boroughs. Nor is the contagion confined within the town: it commonly fpreads all around.

Another confequence no lefs fatal, of leaving magiftrates to act without controul, is a ftrong defire in every licentious burgefs, of ftepping into the magiftracy, for his own fake, and for that of his friends. Hence the factions and animofities that prevail in almoft all the royal boroughs; which are violently and indecently purfued, without the leaft regard to the good of the community.

The greateft evil of all, refpects the choice of their reprefentatives in parliament. A habit of riot and intemperance, makes them fit fubjects to be corrupted by every adventurer who is willing to lay out money for purchafing a feat in parliament. Hence the infamous practice of bribery at elections, which tends not only to corrupt the whole mafs of the people, but, which is ftill more dreadful, tends to fill the Houfe of Commons with men of diffolute manners, void of probity and honour.

But, turning from fcenes fo difmal, let us view the beautiful effects that refult from an adminiftration regularly carried on, as directed by the ftatutes above mentioned. The revenues of the royal boroughs are fuppofed to be above L. 40,000 yearly. And were this fum, or the half of it, prudently expended, for promoting arts and induftry among the numerous inhabitants of royal boroughs; the benefit, in a country fo narrow and poor

poor as Scotland, would be immenfe: it would tend to population, it would greatly increafe induftry, manufactures, and commerce, befide augmenting the public revenue. In the next place, as there would be no temptation for defigning men to convert the burden of magiftracy into a benefit, faction and difcord would vanifh; and there would be no lefs folicitude to fhun the burden, than at prefent is feen to obtain it. None would fubmit to the burden but the truly patriotic, men who would cheerfully beftow their time, and perhaps their money, upon the public; and whofe ambition it would be to acquire a character, by promoting induftry, temperance, and honefty, among their fellow-citizens.

And when the government of the royal boroughs comes to be in fo good hands, bribery, which corrupts the very vitals of our conftitution, will be banifhed of courfe. And confidering the proper conftitutional dependence of the royal boroughs upon the king's judges, we may have reafonable affurance, that few reprefentatives will be chofen but who are friends to their country and to their fovereign.

SKETCH III.

PLAN FOR IMPROVING AND PRESERVING IN ORDER THE HIGHWAYS IN SCOTLAND.

PREFACE.

HIGHWAYS have in Scotland become a capital object of police, by the increafe of inland commerce, upon which bad roads are a heavy tax. Happily for our country, no perfon is ignorant of this truth; and we fee with pleafure the fruits of their conviction in various attempts, public and private, to eftablifh this valuable branch of police upon the beft footing. As this is no eafy tafk, it may reafonably be hoped, that men interefted will ferioufly apply to it, and will freely produce fuch hints as occur to them. In the latter view, the following plan is offered to the public: and if, from the various propofals that have been or fhall be publifhed, an effective plan can be framed, fuch as completely to anfwer its purpofe, it may fafely be pronounced, that it will produce more benefit to this country, than has been produced by any other fingle improvement fince the union of the two kingdoms.

1. THE juftices of peace, commiffioners of fupply, the fheriff or ftewart depute, and the firft magiftrate of royal boroughs, fhall be commiffioners

missioners for making and repairing highways, bridges, and ferries, in the several shires and stewartries. All the powers given by law to the justices of peace, and commissioners of supply, with respect to highways, bridges, and ferries, shall be transferred to them; and any two shall be a quorum, except where a greater number is required by this act.

2. The sheriff or stewart depute shall appoint the first day of meeting of the said commissioners, as soon as may conveniently be after the date of the act, by an intimation at each parish-church upon a Sunday, at the close of the forenoon service. And the last Tuesday of March shall yearly thereafter be a day of meeting at the head borough of the shire or stewartry, in place of the first or third Tuesday of May appointed by former acts. The commissioners shall appoint a preses, convener, and clerk: and they shall be empowered to adjourn themselves from time to time.

3. The commissioners, at their first meeting, shall divide the shire or stewartry into two or more districts, as they see convenient. And if they cannot overtake this work at that meeting, they shall appoint proper persons to form a plan of the intended divisions, which plan shall be reported to the commissioners at their next meeting, in order to be approved or altered by them. This being settled, the commissioners shall appoint the heritors in these several districts, or any three of them, to meet on a certain day and place, to make lists

lifts of the whole public roads within their reſpective diſtricts, and to ſettle the order of reparation, beginning with thoſe that are the moſt frequented. The proceedings of theſe diſtrict meetings muſt be reported to the commiſſioners at their next meeting; who are empowered to ſettle the order of reparation, in caſe of variance among the heritors; and alſo to add any road that may have been omitted. And they ſhall record a ſcheme or plan of the whole roads in the ſhire, thus enliſted, with their reſolutions thereupon, to be ſeen in the clerk's hands *gratis*. But upon any juſt cauſe appearing in the courſe of adminiſtration, the commiſſioners ſhall be empowered to alter or vary this plan, provided it be at a meeting previouſly appointed for that purpoſe, and where three-fifths at leaſt of the commiſſioners are preſent.

4. If the ſheriff or ſtewart neglect to appoint the firſt meeting of the commiſſioners, he ſhall incur a penalty of L. 100, upon a ſummary complaint to the Court of Seſſion by any one heritor of the ſhire, with coſts of ſuit; the one-half of the penalty to the plaintiff, and the other half to be applied by the commiſſioners for the purpoſes of this act. If the commiſſioners fail to meet at the day appointed by the ſheriff or ſtewart, or fail to divide the ſhire or ſtewartry into diſtricts, within ſix months of their firſt meeting, the ſheriff or ſtewart depute, under the foreſaid penalty, ſhall be bound to do that work himſelf; and alſo to appoint

point the heritors in the ſeveral diſtricts, or any three of them, to make liſts of the public roads as above mentioned, and to report their reſolutions to him; and he is empowered to ſettle the order of reparation, in caſe of variance among the heritors. If the heritors fail to meet, and to make a liſt of the roads as aforeſaid, this work ſhall be performed by the ſheriff or ſtewart depute himſelf. And he ſhall be indemnified of whatever expences he is at in proſecuting the ſaid work, out of the ſums that are to be levied by authority of this act, in manner after mentioned, with an additional ſum for his own trouble, to be named by the circuit judges.

5. No perſon ſhall act as a commiſſioner upon this ſtatute, but who has an eſtate within the county of L. 200 Scots valuation, or is heir-preſumptive to ſuch an eſtate, or is named a commiſſioner *virtute officii*, under the penalty of L. 20 Sterling *toties quoties*, to be proſecuted before any competent court, by a proper action, with coſts of ſuit; the one-half to the plaintiff, the other half to the purpoſes of this act.

6. Whereas the ſum of 10 d. directed by the act 1669 to be impoſed upon each L. 100 of valued rent, is inſufficient for the purpoſes therein expreſſed; and whereas the ſix days ſtatute-work for repairing the highways is in many reſpects inconvenient; and therefore, inſtead of the 10 d. and inſtead of the ſtatute-work, the commiſſioners,

ers, together with the heritors poſſeſſed of L. 200 Scots of valued rent, five, whether commiſſioners or heritors, making a quorum, ſhall annually, upon the ſaid laſt Tueſday of March, aſſeſs each heritor, in a ſum not exceeding upon each L. 100 valued rent; the aſſeſſment impoſed on the heritors to be levied by the collector of ſupply, along with the ceſs, and by the ſame legal remedies. The heritors are entitled to relieve themſelves of the one-half of the ſaid aſſeſſment, by laying the ſame upon their tenants, in proportion to the rent they pay; an heritor being always conſidered as a tenant of the land he has in his natural poſſeſſion.

7. With reſpect to boroughs of royalty, regality, and barony, and large trading villages, the commiſſioners are empowered to levy from each houſeholder, a ſum not exceeding 2 s. yearly, more or leſs in proportion to the aſſeſſment of the ſhire, to be paid within forty days after notice given, under the penalty of double, beſides expences of proceſs. Provided, that any of theſe houſeholders who have country-farms, by which they contribute to relieve their landlords as above mentioned, ſhall be exempted from this part of the aſſeſſment.

8. If the commiſſioners and heritors neglect to aſſeſs their ſhire, or name ſo ſmall a ſum as to be an eluſory aſſeſſment, inſufficient to anſwer the purpoſes of this act, the court of Juſticiary, or the circuit-judges, are in that caſe empowered and required

quired to lay on the higheſt aſſeſſment that is made lawful by this act. In caſe of a total omiſſion, the commiſſioners and heritors who, by neglecting to convene without a good cauſe of abſence, have occaſioned the ſaid omiſſion, ſhall be ſubjected each of them to a penalty of L. 20 Sterling. And to make theſe penalties effectual, the Truſtees for fiſheries and manufactures are appointed to ſue for the ſame before the Court of Seſſion, and to apply the ſame, when recovered, to any uſeful purpoſe within the ſhire, eſpecially to the purpoſes of this act. And to preſerve the ſaid fines entire for the public ſervice, the truſtees ſhall be entitled to coſts of ſuit.

9. The ſums levied as aforeſaid ſhall be laid out annually upon the highways, bridges, and ferries, for making, repairing, or improving the ſame; proceeding regularly with the reparation according to the ſcheme or plan ordered as above to be ſettled in each ſhire and ſtewartry.

10. With reſpect to roads that are not the firſt in order, and for which there is no interim proviſion by this act during reparation of the more frequented roads, the commiſſioners are empowered to exact from cottars and day-labourers their ſtatute-work, according to the acts preſently in force, to be applied to theſe ſecondary roads. The ſtatute-work is not to be demanded unleſs for this purpoſe; and is to ceaſe totally after the highways

have,

have, by means of the preſent act, been once totally repaired.

11. The commiſſioners and heritors, at all their meetings, ſhall bear their own charges.

12. The clauſe in the act 1661, empowering heritors, at the ſight of the ſheriff, to caſt about highways for their convenience, ſhall be repealed; and it ſhall be declared unlawful, in time coming, to turn about or change any highway, unleſs for the benefit of the public, as by ſhortening it, carrying it through firmer ground, or making it more level; and to that purpoſe the commiſſioners ſhall be empowered to turn about highways, as alſo to widen the ſame, not exceeding thirty feet, free of ditches. But the commiſſioners ſhall have no power to carry a road through any houſe, garden, orchard, or pleaſure-ground.

13. The commiſſioners ſhall have power to take from the adjacent lands, ſtones, ſand, gravel, or other materials for making the highways, paying always for the damage done.

14. With reſpect to highways that bound the properties of neighbouring heritors, which it may be found neceſſary to alter or widen, the commiſſioners ſhall be empowered to adjudge to one heritor any ſmall bits of ground cut off from the other by the road ſo altered; and if land cannot be given for land, to make a compenſation in money, valuing the land at the current price of the market.

15. In order to prevent water ſtagnating on the highways,

highways, the commiſſioners ſhall be empowered to make ditches or drains through neighbouring grounds; and ſuch ditches or drains ſhall be preſerved entire by the proprietors of the land, or at their charges.

16. As the foreſaid aſſeſſment, after repairing the highways, may not be ſufficient for building bridges or making ferries, where rivers are large; any five of the commiſſioners may, for building bridges or making ferries, eſtabliſh a pontage or toll; ſo much for horſes, ſo much for horned cattle, and ſo much for ſheep, and the double for each beaſt in a wheel-carriage. Upon the credit of the toll, the ſaid commiſſioners may borrow money, to be employed wholly upon the bridge or ferry where the toll is gathered.

But before borrowing, an eſtimate muſt be made of the expence of the work. After the work is finiſhed, the ſum beſtowed on it muſt be aſcertained: an accurate account muſt be kept of the gradual payments of this ſum by the toll; and when it is completely paid, the commiſſioners muſt declare the bridge or ferry to be free.

17. The determinations of the commiſſioners ſhall be final, unleſs complained of in manner following.

18. If any heritor apprehend that undue preference is given to a certain highway, or conceive himſelf aggrieved by any order or ſentence of the commiſſioners, it ſhall be lawful for him, within forty

forty days of the act complained of, to enter a complaint in the Court of Seſſion; and the judgment upon ſuch complaint ſhall be final. But ſuch complaint ſhall only be effectual for damages, and ſhall not ſtay execution of the work. At the ſame time, no complaint ſhall be admitted till ſecurity be given to pay full coſts, in caſe the plaintiff be found in the wrong.

19. Former laws concerning highways, bridges, or ferries, to continue in force, unleſs as far as altered by this act.

20. An annual ſtate of what is done by virtue of this act, made by the commiſſioners, or their clerk, ſhall, before the laſt Tueſday of March, be laid before the truſtees for fiſheries and manufactures, in order to be made a part of their annual report to the King; and theſe truſtees ſhall direct proper perſons to inſpect what work is done upon the high-roads, and in what manner. Upon any miſapplication or embezzlement of the money levied, any neglect in levying, or any wrong done to the public, contrary to the intention of this act, the truſtees are required to ſet on foot and proſecute what redreſs is competent in law or equity, provided the proſecution be commenced within a year after the offence.

Query, Ought not broad wheels to be required?

CON-

CONSIDERATIONS THAT SUPPORT THE PRECEDING PLAN.

THE laws in Scotland relating to this branch of public police, are numerous; ſome enacted while Scotland was a ſeparate kingdom, ſome after its union with England. It is not the purpoſe of this eſſay to enter into a detail of the various regulations eſtabliſhed by theſe laws: they are generally known; and in the late abridgment of our ſtatute-law, they are all recapitulated with brevity and preciſion. It ſhall ſuffice curſorily to obſerve, that the acts made during the reign of Charles II. form the ground-work of our regulations concerning highways: the later acts are little more than explanatory of the former.

It ſeems to have been the plan of the Legiſlature, that highways ſhould be repaired by thoſe who are employed in huſbandry; and accordingly, the ſix days annual labour is, in the ſtatutes of Charles II. impoſed upon them only.

This was a meaſure not ill ſuited to the ſtate of Scotland at that period. During the laſt century, we had little inland commerce to require good roads, except that of corn carried to market; and for that reaſon, it was natural to impoſe upon

hufbandmen the burden of repairing highways. Thefe perfons, at the fame time, paffing the whole fummer in idlenefs, unlefs when called to perform perfonal fervices to capricious and unfeeling landlords, could not think it a hardfhip to have fome part of their time employed in ferving themfelves inftead of their landlords.

That annual labour upon highways, limited to a few days, fhould be required from men in that condition, appears not unjuft. And why may we not fuppofe the Legiflature at that time capable of fuch enlarged views, as to prefer this method for repairing highways, in order to bring on gradually a habit of labour and induftry? But the condition of Scotland at prefent differs widely from what it was in the reign of Charles II.; and the regulations for repairing highways which were then proper, have, by alteration of circumftances, become both unjuft and inexpedient.

Unjuft they have become in a high degree. Inland commerce, which begins to flourifh in Scotland, is greatly promoted by good roads; and every dealer, and indeed every traveller, profits by them. But no men are lefs interefted in good roads than day-labourers, or thofe who are commonly called *cottars*; and yet thefe chiefly are burdened with the reparation. Such men, at the fame time having commonly many children, find it difficult to fupport their families, even with their utmoft induftry. Nothing can be more unjuft,

juſt, than to impoſe upon ſuch men an annual tax of ſix days labour for repairing roads, the goodneſs of which contributes little or nothing to their convenience.

Our preſent laws are inexpedient, as well as unjuſt. In the firſt place, a tax of this nature diſcourages the propagation of children, in which the ſtrength of a ſtate conſiſts: the poor labourer ought to be encouraged with a reward, inſtead of being diſcouraged with a tax. In the next place, cottars called out to perform the ſtatute-work, obey with reluctance, and trifle away time without doing any thing effectual. To enforce the law, and to compel ſuch men to labour, is grievous to the gentlemen who are empowered to execute the law: they cannot puniſh with rigour or firmneſs men who have ſo good reaſon to decline the ſervice: they are ſoon diſguſted with being taſkmaſters, and the generality deſiſt altogether.

Laws concerning private property are always kept in obſervance; and they execute themſelves, as is commonly expreſſed, becauſe there are always a multitude of individuals ſtrongly intereſted to have them executed. But, in making public laws, the great difficulty has ever been, to lay down effectual meaſures for putting them in execution: by what means to make ſuch laws execute themſelves, is one of the moſt intricate problems in politics. Our laws concerning highways, are eminently defective in that reſpect: and accordingly,

 though

though moſt of them have exiſted near a century, they never have at any period been executed to any extent. Take the following ſpecimen, among many that may be urged, of this defect. Overſeers are forced into the ſervice under a penalty, in order to compel the peaſants to perform faithfully their ſix days labour. To hope any good from a reluctant overſeer ſet over a ſet of reluctant labourers, is a fond conceit: it is much if his reſentment tempt him not to encourage their idleneſs. In vain would we expect, that any overſeer, without a ſuitable reward, will exert himſelf in promoting the work.

To remedy the hardſhip of laying the burden of reparation upon thoſe who are leaſt able and leaſt benefited, and at the ſame time to make this remedy effectual, is the purpoſe of the foregoing plan. And upon conſidering the matter in its different views, the only method that promiſes ſucceſs, appears to be a county-tax laid upon land according to the valuation, and a capitation-tax on the inhabitants of boroughs. Theſe taxes relieve the labouring poor, and lay the burden where it ought to be laid: and the law will execute itſelf, if that effect can be hoped from any public law: effectual meaſures are laid down for levying the tax; and, if once levied, there is no danger of its being allowed to lie unemployed in the hands of the collector, for every heritor will be anxious to have ſome part employed for his benefit. The danger will

will rather be of factious disputes about the distribution. This danger also is attempted to be prevented; and, it is hoped, with success.

Some narrow-minded persons may possibly grudge a tax, that loads the present generation for the advantage of those who come after: but is it rational to grudge, that others should benefit by measures evidently calculated for advancing our own interest? Let us suppose, that the heritors of a shire were to concert measures in common, for improving their lands: to make good roads would be one effectual measure; for, supposing their reparation to cost L. 5000, their estates would be bettered double that sum.

To conclude: it is not to be expected that any regulations concerning highways, or concerning any branch of police, can be so framed as to please every individual. Wise men are practicable men, to use an expression of Lord Bacon, and will make concessions, in order to promote a general good, if without such concessions it cannot be obtained. Better far to have a good law, though, in our opinion, defective in some articles, than to have no law at all; or, which is worse, a law eminently defective, unjust, and inexpedient.

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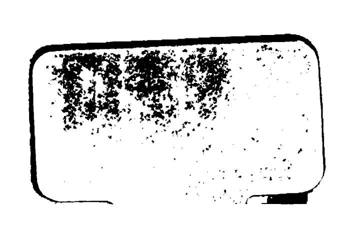
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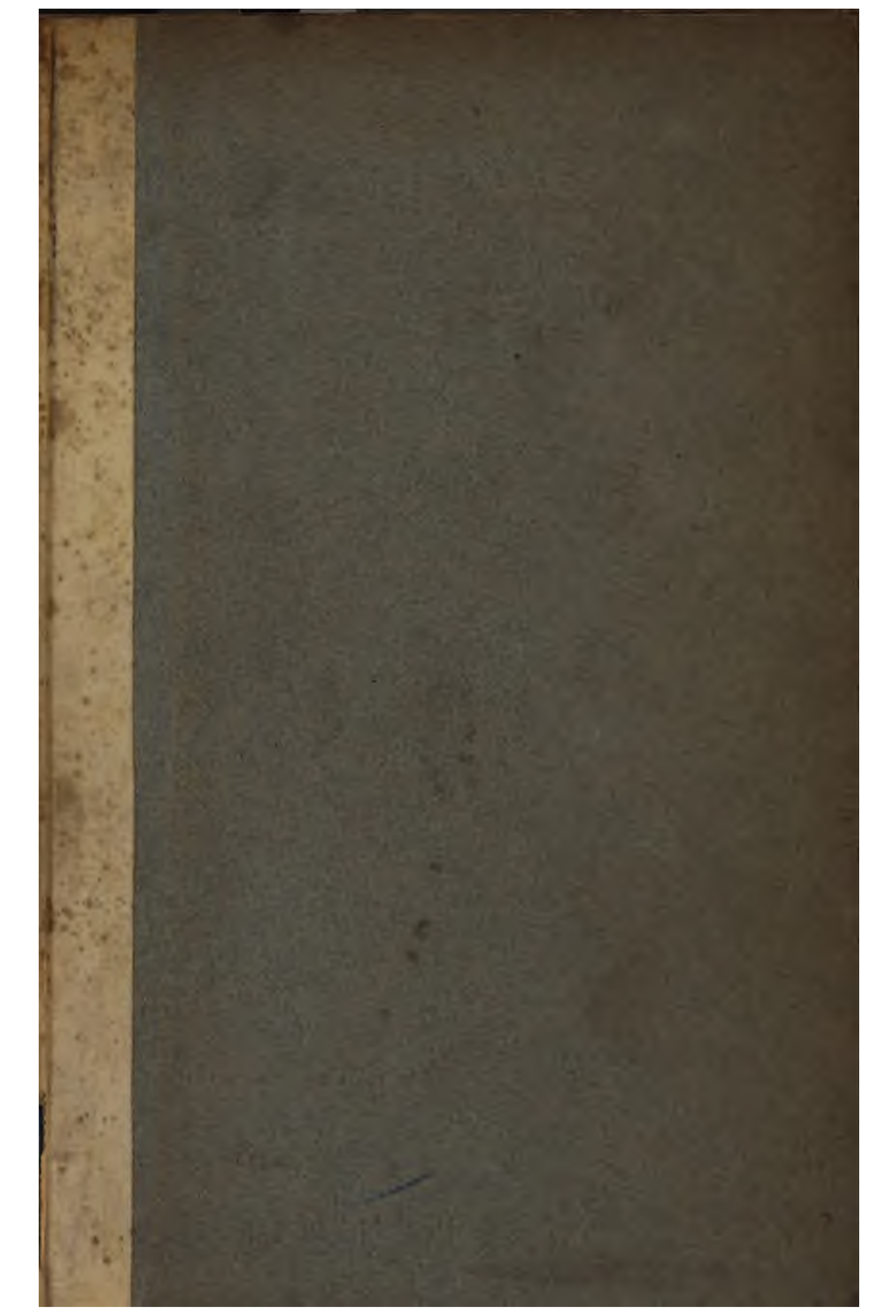
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DER OCTAVIUS

DES

MINUCIUS FELIX.

EINE

HEIDNISCH-PHILOSOPHISCHE AUFFASSUNG

VOM CHRISTENTHUM

VON

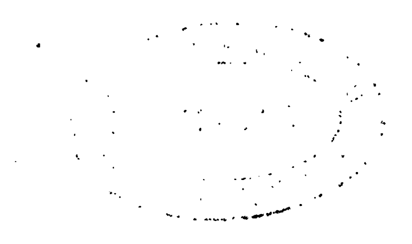
DR. RICHARD KÜHN

MITGLIED DES PREDIGERCOLLEGS ZU ST. PAULI IN LEIPZIG.

LEIPZIG

ROSSBERG'SCHE BUCHHANDLUNG

1882.



INHALT.

VORWORT.

Der „Octavius“ des Minucius Felix hat trotz seines geringen Umfanges bedeutendes Interesse erregt. Nachdem er einmal durch Franz Balduin 1560 als selbstständige Schrift und nicht wie ehedem durch Faustus Sabäus 1543 als liber octavus der Schrift des Arnobius an die Oeffentlichkeit gelangt war, haben die Gelehrten aller Zeiten, besonders aber der Gegenwart, sich mit ihm beschäftigt. Zunächst in der chronologischen Frage. Galt hier anfangs die Priorität des mit dem „Octavius“ sich mannichfach berührenden „Apologeticum“ Tertullians als schlechthin unanfechtbar, indem man vor allem nicht wagte, an der litterarischen Selbstständigkeit des berühmten Afrikaners zu zweifeln, so wurde die Folgezeit grade der entgegengesetzten Meinung. Die ersten Bedenken gingen von Frankreich aus, erhoben von Blondel 1641 und Daillé 1660*) und wurden auf deutschem Boden von v. Hoven 1766, Rössler 1777, Russwurm 1824, Meier u. A. getheilt. Indess, erst A. Ebert gelang es, in seiner Schrift „Tertullians Verh. zu Min. Felix,“ Leipzig 1868 (vgl. auch seine „Gesch. der Litt. des Mittelalters im Abendlande,“ Bd. 1, 1874. S. 25 f.) für die Priorität des „Octavius“ einen vollgültigen Nachweis zu liefern. Wenn gleichwohl gegen dieses Ergebniss sich Stimmen erhoben haben, wie W. Hartel (Zeitschr. für d. österr. Gymn. 1869, S. 348—368), welcher jedoch zu jenem nicht in directem Widerspruch steht, da er für beide

*) D. Blondel „Eclaircissements familiers de la controverse de l'Eucharistie“ (Quevilly 1641) p. 119. J. Daillé „Lettre à M. Le Coq de la Talonnière, sur le changement de religion de M. Cottiby“ (Charenton 1660) p. 92 vgl. Paul de Félice Étude p. 17. J. D. van Hoven in s. Brief ad Gerh. Meermann 1766, abgedr. in Lindners edit. II 1773. Rössler Bibl. d. Kchv. 1777 Bd. 3. Russwurm in s. Ausg. 1824. Meier commentatio, Turin 1824.

Apologieen eine verloren gegangene lateinische Quelle voraussetzt, ferner wie E. Klussmann (vgl. Jenaer Litt-Ztg. 1878, No. 4, S. 59 f.) oder aber wie V. Schultze, der in den Jahrb. f. prot. Theol. 1881, No. 3, S. 485—506 die Priorität des Apologeticum nachzuweisen sucht und die Abfassung des „Octavius“ sogar zwischen 300—303 verlegt, — so wird trotzdem Eberts Resultat jetzt immer allgemeiner anerkannt*). Auch wir halten im Wesentlichen daran fest.

Welches Interesse man dem „Octavius“ auch von philologischer und theologischer Seite entgegenbrachte, das beweisen die zahlreichen, bisher erschienenen Ausgaben und die ihn betreffenden Abhandlungen. Nach oben genannten zwei ersten Editionen sind folgende zu nennen: die von Fulvius Ursinus 1583; Meursius 1598; Wowerus 1603; Elmenhorstius 1603; Heraldus 1605, 1613; Rigaltius 1643, 1645; Ouzelius 1652, 1672; Cellarius 1699; Davisius 1707; Gronovius 1709, 1743; Lindner 1760, 1773; Russwurm 1824; Lübkert 1836; Muralt 1836; Migne Patrol. III. 1844; Oehler 1847; Kayser in us. schol. 1863; Halm, Wien 1867, welche letzte unserer Arbeit zu Grunde liegt und Dombart, Erlangen 1881 (mit Uebersetzung). Die jüngste erst vor Kurzem erschienene Ausgabe ist von J. J. Cornelissen, Lugduni-Batavorum 1882 (E. J. Brill). Besondere Abhandlungen aber schrieben neben bereits genannten v. Hoven, Meier, Ebert, noch Fr. Balduin und D. Nic. Le Nourry in Mignes Patr. tom. III. 3. S. 194—231, 371—652; C. Rören, „Minuciana,“ Bedburg 1859; E. Voreaux, thèse présentée à la faculté de theol. prot. de Strassbourg 1859; J. B. Kayser in Wiedemanns österr. Quartalschr. für kathol. Theol. I. 4, 1862; E. Behr, der „Octavius“ des M. F. in s. Verh. zu Ciceros Büchern de nat. deorum, Gera 1870; A. Faber, de M. F. comm., Nordhausen 1872; Th. Keim, „Celsus' wahres Wort,“ Zürich 1873, S. 151—168; ferner Paul de Félice, „Étude sur l'Octavius, thèse pour la licence etc., Blois 1880, sowie neustens G. Loesche, „Minucius Felix' Verh. zu Athenagoras“ in den Jahrb. für prot. Theol. 1882, No. 1, S. 168—178**).

*) Ist höchstens „einer theilweisen Neubegründung bedürftig“ (aber auch fähig), wie K. J. Neumann bemerkt. (Theol. Litt.-Ztg. 1881, No. 18. S. 422.) Sonst vgl. Bonwetsch „Die Schriften Tertullians nach der Zeit ihrer Abfassung untersucht“ Bonn 1878. S. 21 u. Dombart „Uebersetzung des Oct.“ 1881. S. VIII Anm. 3.

**) Mit text-kritischen Fragen beschäftigen sich noch speziell die Aufsätze von E. Bährens (lectiones latt. Bonn 1870 p. 22—31), H. A. Koch (Rhein. Mus. XXVIII, S. 615—621), B. Dombart „z. Erkl. u. Kritik des M. F.“ in Zeitschr. für d. bayr. Gymn. IX. 1873 S. 285—300.

Während aber die feine, in Form eines philosophischen Dialoges gebrachte Schutzschrift des Minucius nach diesen Seiten so vielfache Anregung gab und Berücksichtigung fand, so blieb doch grade ihre charakteristische Seite, die philosophische, bisher ganz unberücksichtigt. Man trat mit zu einseitig christlich-theologischem Interesse an die Apologie heran und setzte in dem feingebildeten Apologeten von vorn herein auch eine christliche Durchbildung voraus, wie man sie wenigstens bei den griechischen Apologeten anzunehmen pflegte*). Dies führte nothwendig dazu, dass man die zahlreichen Lücken in der christlichen Anschauung des Minucius sich nicht anders als aus Tendenz des Verfassers zu erklären wusste, andrerseits aber dahin, das gesammte philosophische Material in der Apologie zu einem blossen Accidens herabzuwürdigen. Vertreter dieser Ansicht sind neben A. Faber vor allem B. Dombart in der Vorrede zu seiner Uebersetzung und Paul de Félice in seiner Étude. Beide von obiger Voraussetzung an die Schrift herantretend**) und darum von ihrem geringen christlichen Inhalt unbefriedigt, fassen dieselbe als eine vorläufige Grundlage für eine fernere christliche Belehrung des heidnischen Publicums. Während aber Dombart nur von jener vorbereitenden Grundlage spricht, glaubt Paul de Félice dem Apologeten auch die fernere christliche Belehrung nachweisen zu können. Anknüpfend an zwei Stellen***) im Dialog, die auf eine Fortsetzung desselben schliessen lassen, betrachtet er den „Octavius" nur als die allgemeine Einleitung zu einer Reihe spezial-christlicher, jedoch nicht mehr

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*) Vgl. übrigens M. v. Engelhardt Christenthum Justins 1878.

**) Characteristisch dafür ist, dass P. de F. den discours d'Octavius (chap. III. S. 112) d. h. Referat und Kritik gleich mit den Lücken beginnt, die er in demselben bemerkt hat. In der Voraussetzung, auch Minucius habe diese bemerken müssen, glaubt er auf eine Absicht desselben schliessen zu können S. 112: ... nous croyons préférable de signaler les lacunes du discours d'Octavius avant de dire ce qu'il contient. Par là nous pourrons, dès le début, bien déterminer quel nous paraît être le but qu'il a poursuivi. Er bemerkt im Ganzen drei Lücken: 1) l'absence de citations bibliques, 2) le silence presque complet sur la personne, la mission et l'oeuvre du Christ, 3) le silence sur la doctrine chrétienne par excellence, nous voulons parler du salut par la foi.

***) Nämlich 40, 2. 36, 2 (de fato) S. 118. Wir bemerken gleich hier zur richtigen Taxirung dieser Stellen, dass 40, 2 durchaus Nachahmung Ciceros ist De n. D. 40: Sed quoniam advesperascit, dabis diem nobis aliquem, ut contra ista dicamus, die Schrift de fato aber nach 36, 2 schon vom Alterthum angezweifelt worden ist. Vgl. Hieron. cat. script. eccl. c. 58 sowie ep. ad Magnum.

erhaltener Abhandlungen. In diese nun verlegt er den Schwerpunkt des ganzen minucianischen Christenthums, dort lässt er alle Lücken, die er hier bemerkte, nach und nach ausgefüllt werden und weist uns so von der einzigen erhaltenen Schrift des Minucius hinweg auf ein System blosser Vermuthungen*).

Diese Auffassungen überschätzen das christliche Element ebenso sehr, wie sie das philosophische unterschätzen. Es ist selbstverständlich, dass in dem Anschauungskreise eines so fein gebildeten und erst so spät zum Christenthum bekehrten Heiden das Heidnisch-Philosophische das Prius ist, der christliche Stoff aber erst durch sein heidnisches Verständniss hindurch musste. Schreibt nun ein Solcher eine christliche Apologie von anerkannt geringem christlichen und grossem philosophischen Gehalte, so ist dies doch weit eher auf die Nachwirkung seiner heidnisch-philosophischen Bildung zurückzuführen, als auf seine christlich-apologetische Tendenz, zumal wenn deren Fundament, die christliche Bildung, nur beweislos angenommen wird.

Von dieser entgegengesetzten Voraussetzung ausgehend sehen wir in der Schutzschrift des Minucius Felix, im Besonderen in der Rede des Octavius, zunächst nichts anderes, als einen Ausdruck der persönlichen Auffassung ihres heidnisch gebildeten Verfassers.

Diese Auffassung zu prüfen ist Zweck vorliegender Abhandlung. Die bisherigen Darlegungen ergänzend suchen wir grade von der philosophischen Seite in die Apologie einzudringen und haben es zunächst etwas umfassender versucht, die gesammte heidnische Bildung des Apologeten festzustellen, um sodann zu prüfen, wie dieser das Christenthum verstanden hat.

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*) Vgl. S. 117: A nos yeux l'Oct. n'est qu'une Introduction à différents traités d'apologétique, dont le premier fut sans doute, en tout cas paraît avoir dû être le traité de Fato auquel il a été déjà fait allusion. Paul de Félice weiss auch, was darin stand S. 118: On peut conclure que dans ce traité Min. devait parler de la grâce, du salut par la foi et non par les oeuvres. Inhalt aber der nächsten Abhandlungen war sodann die Person Christi, seine Mission, sein Werk, die Propheten die ihn verkündigt hatten, ihre Autorität, der Bund mit Gott, die heiligen Schriften. C'est ainsi, so schliesst er die Betrachtung, que peu à peu, et par une série de traités, toutes les importantes questions auraient été étudiées, et les lacunes comblées (S. 119).

EINLEITUNG.

Der gebildete Heide.

Ueber die Person des Minucius Felix sind nur spärliche Nachrichten zu uns gelangt. Die äusseren Zeugnisse bei Lactanz und Hieronymus besagen nicht viel mehr, als dass er Verfasser des „Octavius" und ein angesehener Rechtsanwalt (causidicus) zu Rom gewesen sei*). Auch das Wort causidicus verräth nichts für unsern Zweck, denn es hatte im Ganzen eine recht üble Bedeutung. Zur Zeit Ciceros und noch des zweiten Jahrhunderts verstand man darunter einen ganz gewöhnlichen Winkeladvokaten und Processeführer von gutem Mundwerk, angelernter juristischer Routine, aber ohne jegliche höhere Bildung. Cicero selbst stellt einmal einen causidicus in directen Gegensatz zu seinem bekannten, hochgebildeten Redner und zwar in für jenen recht bezeichnende Nachbarschaft: Non enim causidicum nescio quem neque proclamatorem aut rabulam hoc nostro sermone conquirimus, sed — so fährt er an ähnlicher Stelle kürzer fort — oratorem doctissimum et perfectissimum**). Fast ebenso äussert sich Quintilian XII, 1, 25, vergl. auch Juvenal VI, 438 ff. Wir können das Wort nicht weiter

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*) Lact. instit. I, 11: Minucius Felix in eo libro, qui „Octavius" inscribitur etc. V. 1. Min. Felix non ignobilis inter causidicos loci fuit. Huius liber, cui „Octavius" titulus est, declarat, quam idoneus veritatis assertor esse potuisset, si se totum ad id studium contulisset. Hieron. cat. script. eccl. c. 58: Minucius Felix, Romae insignis causidicus, scripsit dialogum Christiani et Ethnici disputantium, qui Oct. inscribitur. Sed et alius sub nomine eius fertur „de fato" vel contra Mathematicos, qui cum sit et ipse diserti hominis, non mihi cum superioris libri stylo convenire videtur. Derselbe ad Magnum: Min. Felix causidicus Romani fori in eo libro, cui Octav. titulus est, et in altero contra Mathem., si tamen inscriptio non mentitur auctorem, quid gentilium scripturarum dimisit intactum?

**) De orat. I. 46. 202. Orat. 15, 47.

verfolgen, wohl aber annehmen*), dass es zur Zeit der Antonine einen jener Juristen bezeichnete, die im Unterschied von eigentlichen Rechtsgelehrten sich der Praxis zuwandten, „mit oder ohne öffentlichen Charakter Bescheide über Rechtsfragen ertheilten oder Processe führten." Aber auch bei dieser Auffassung des Wortes fällt auf den Minucius Felix der Verdacht, eine höhere Bildung nicht besessen zu haben.

Wenden wir uns daher direct an seinen „Octavius" und fragen wir, welches Zeugniss dieser dem causidicus auszustellen vermag.

Zunächst die Personalien. Marcus Minucius Felix hat die Jugend mit seinem Busenfreunde Octavius Januarius verlebt, vielleicht auch mit ihm zusammen studirt**), ist aber von jugendlichen Fehltritten nicht frei gewesen. Er gesteht dies selbst ein, 1, 4: sic solus in amoribus conscius, ipse socius in erroribus. Später wählten beide die Advokatenthätigkeit zu ihrem Lebensberufe und waren, wie es scheint, noch als Männer nicht bloss Heiden, sondern sogar Gegner des Christenthums, indem sie die christlichen Bekenner auf die bekannte ungerechte Weise gerichtlich verfolgen halfen (c. 28). Erst auf Vorantritt des Octavius ging Minucius zum Christenthum über. Als Christen jedoch scheinen sie sich getrennt zu haben, um vielleicht nach langer Zeit erst (2, 1) in Rom sich wiederzusehen, wohin Octavius aus überseeischer Provinz (3, 4) herbeigekommen war, wo aber Minucius bereits ansässig das Amt eines Advokaten auch als Christ noch und allem Anschein nach in ziemlichem Ansehen weiter verwaltete. Hier zu Rom hat er wohl auch seinen Dialog geschrieben.

Dieser selbst, zu dem wir uns jetzt speciell wenden, macht seiner Gesammt- wie Einzelnanlage nach den Eindruck strengster Ordnung, genauester Durcharbeitung und zeugt von einem unfraglich rhetorisch gebildeten Verfasser, der namentlich die Kapitel de inventione und de collocatione aus dem Grunde verstand. Schon die Idee, den heidnisch-christlichen Stoff in zwei Reden zu fassen, bekundet rednerisches Interesse. Mehr aber noch deren Ausführung. Beide Reden (c. 5—13, 16—38), Angriff und Widerlegung, Heidenthum und Christenthum, sind, gleich zwei Portraits in einem Rahmen, von einer gemeinsamen Einkleidung umschlossen (c. 1—4, 14—15, 39—40), im Innern selbst wieder streng gegliedert und

*) Teuffel „Gesch. der röm. Litt." 3. Aufl. 1875 S. 837.
**) Contubernalis Teuffel S. 862.

in diesen ihren Untertheilen, selbst in den einzelnen Punkten, einander entsprechend angelegt. Deutlich unterscheidet man in jeder Rede drei Untertheile. Wir bemerken einen philosophischen (c. 5 vgl. c. 16, 5—c. 19, 15), einen heidnisch-apologetischen (c. 6—7), dem christlicherseits ein polemischer (c. 20—27 einschliesslich des Uebergangstheils der Dämonologie) und endlich einen heidnisch-polemischen, dem anderseits ein christlich-apologetischer entspricht (c. 8—13, vgl. c. 28—38). Den Schluss jeder Rede bildet eine mit proinde eingeleitete und schulgerecht mit einer adhortatio endende peroratio (c. 12, 7—c. 13, 5, vgl. c. 38, 5—6), welche beide sich gleichfalls genau entsprechen und den Hauptinhalt der einzelnen Reden kurz herausstellen.

Je näher man an den Dialog herantritt, desto mehr kann man seine kunstvolle Composition bewundern. Nicht nur stehen sich die zwei Reden bis in die einzelnen Gedanken und Ausdrücke hinein, wie Frage und Antwort gegenüber und lassen so einen einheitlichen Disputirstoff erkennen, sondern jede einzelne Rede, selbst jeder Untertheil bildet seinerseits wieder ein abgerundetes Ganze, das gleichwohl mit dem nächsten wie vorhergehenden in engstem Zusammenhang steht. Minucius erreicht dies einerseits durch zahlreiche Recapitulationen, wodurch er die einzelnen Gedanken zu selbstständigen Gedanken g r u p p e n abschliesst, andrerseits durch die gewandtesten Uebergänge*), die jene einzelnen Gedankengruppen aneinanderketten und so das gesammte Material zu einem schönen Ganzen zusammenschliessen. Namentlich ist dies

*) Schon A. Ebert erwähnt dieselben und führt als Beispiele c. 25—26 und 38, 2—4 bis zum Schlussabschnitt der Rede des Octavius an. Wir unsererseits halten für den geschicktesten Uebergang den ganzen Abschnitt der Dämonologie, als Mittelglied zwischen dem eigentlichen zweiten und dem dritten Theil. Er ist einerseits die Erklärung für den vorausgehenden heidnischen error (fons erroris) als auch für die nachfolgenden Vorwürfe gegen die Christen (fons pravitatis). Einen musterhaften Aufbau bietet der erste Untertheil dieser Rede. Streng nach den angekündigten Vorbedingungen, namentlich der deductiven Methode (17, 2), wird in dem angewandten Theil 17, 4—18, 3 vom All angefangen und beim Menschen aufgehört. Dieses alles wird in dem Vergleich vom wohlgeordneten Haus recapitulirt und dann mit nochmals rückblickendem Uebergang zu der Frage nach der Einheit Gottes fortgeschritten, die mit vierfachem Beweise belegt wird, aus der G e s c h i c h t e (5), aus der N a t u r (7), dem G o t t e s b e g r i f f selbst (7) und dem c o n s e n s u s o m n i u m (11), deren letzter sich wieder in drei Theile zerlegt (Volk, Dichter, Philosophen 18, 11. 19, 1. 19, 3). Die Einheit Gottes erhält 20, 1 ihre Recapituration, gerade wie der ganze erste Untertheil 20, 2: quod si providentia mundus regitur et unius Dei nutu gubernatur etc.

in der Rede des Octavius bemerkbar, welcher der Verfasser als der Widerlegung naturgemäss die grössere Sorgfalt widmete. Wir verweisen hier für alle Einzelnorientirung auf die Analysen bei Lindner, Ebert und Paul de Félice*).

Wir sind nun grade bei Minucius Felix in der glücklichen Lage, auf den Lehrer schliessen zu können, bei welchem er in die Schule gegangen. Es ist kein Anderer als der Altmeister Cicero. Die äussere Anlage des Octavius, sowie auch manches Material, verdankt er diesem, in Sonderheit dessen Büchern de natura Deorum. Die daselbst Disputirenden, der Epikureer Vellejus, der Akademiker Cotta und der Stoiker Balbus, vornehmlich letztere zwei**), sind in unseren Disputanten Cäcilius Natalis und Octavius Januarius unschwer wieder zu erkennen. Die Zuhörerrolle des Cicero hat Minucius übernommen, als Zeit sind gleichfalls die Gerichtsferien, zum Ort ist aber nicht das Haus des Gastgebers, sondern die Meeresküste bei Ostia gewählt. Den Gegenstand des Gespräches bildet mit Abzug des christlichen Materials ebenfalls das Wesen der Götter. Welche weiteren Aehnlichkeiten sich nachweisen lassen, zeigt obige auf Eberts Anregung erschienene *Dissertation* von E. Behr „der „Octavius“ des Minucius Felix in seinem Verhältniss zu Ciceros Büchern de natura Deorum.“ Gera, 1870. Aber auch sonst enthält der Dialog manche Berührungen mit ciceronianischen Schriften oder ciceronianischer Eigenthümlichkeit.

Ersteres beweist grade der Eingang. Absehend von einigen kleineren Reminiscenzen in den ersten Zeilen***) stossen wir auf eine frappante Aehnlichkeit mit dem Eingang von Ciceros Brutus. Hier wie dort dasselbe Stimmungsbild. Jeder der zwei Verfasser gedenkt voll Wehmuth eines dahingegangenen Freundes, jeder schildert die gegenseitigen engen Beziehungen und endlich seinen tiefen Schmerz um den Verstorbenen. Auch in den Ausdrücken ähneln sich die Eingänge. Bei Cicero ist es der socius et

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*) J. G. Lindner „analysis logica“ abgedruckt in Mignes Patrol. lat. tom. III. 3 S. 226. Ad. Ebert in obiger Schrift abgedruckt in den Abhandlungen der königl. sächs. Gesellschaft der Wissensch. XII. Bd. V. 1870 S. 332—340. — Paul de F. S. 41—78.

**) Der Epikureer kommt dogmatisch wenig in Frage.

***) Das bekannte cogitanti mihi und die beliebten Metaphern (trans) acta et decursa, vielleicht auch das an ad Att. 5, 10 erinnernde intimis sensibus. Vgl. die Anmerkungen in der Ausgabe v. J. Gronovius, Leyden 1709.

consors gloriosi laboris, der conjunctissimus meorum consiliorum omnium societate, welcher triste nobis desiderium reliquerat (1, 2). Im Octavius ist es der conscius in amoribus, ipse socius in erroribus, welcher pari mecum voluntate concinebat eadem velle vel nolle und immensum sui desiderium nobis reliquit. Somit gleich in der Einleitung Spuren von Cicero*). In der Disputation selbst ist es noch dessen Dialog de divinatione, welcher von Minucius unstreitig benutzt worden ist (2, 24, 52. 2, 56, 116 und 57, 118, vergl. Octavius c. 26, 4—6).

An Cicero ferner erinnert in der Einkleidung**) jene feine Urbanität des Gesprächs, welche den einzelnen Personen des Dialogs, vor allem unserem Verfasser eignet***). Es ist jener „gute Ton“ gegenseitiger Artigkeit und Verbindlichkeit, in dem die Gebildeten, namentlich der römischen Hauptstadt, mit oder von einander zu reden pflegten und den sie selbst im engsten Freundeskreise beibehielten. Er ist ein Characteristicum ciceronianischer Schriften, besonders seiner Dialoge und Briefe. Beweis sind Liebenswürdigkeiten wie diese: homo tibi subiratus, mihi propter eam ipsam causam minus quam volebam familiaris†), wo auch nach der andern Seite ein Compliment gemacht wird, oder aber wie fast ebenso ad Attic. V, 9: Dionysium semper equidem, ut scis, dilexi: sed cotidie pluris facio et mehercule in primis, quod

*) Auch die folgenden Ausdrücke der Einleitung scheinen Reminiscenzen zu sein, wenn auch nicht gerade ciceronianische: eadem velle vel nolle, das stark an das geflügelte Wort Sallusts erinnert: idem velle atque idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est (Cat. 20, 4), sowie auch der viel gebrauchte Gedanke: unam mentem in duobus divisam, welcher vielleicht auf Lälius 25, 92: amicitiae vis in eo (est) ut unus quasi animus fiat ex pluribus oder aber auf das schöne horazianische Wort anspielt Od. II, 17: A, te meae si partem animae rapit maturior vis, quid moror altera? — Es ist entschieden auffällig, dass der Verfasser bei diesen seinen Herzensergiessungen fremder Ausdrücke sich bedient. Der Eindruck entsteht, als sei dieser Tod und diese Freundschaft weniger Wiedergabe einer Thatsache als vielmehr Produkt künstlerischer Fiction.

**) Im Dialog selbst geht's manchmal scharf her, vgl. c. 25 u. 28. Hier weicht der Dialog der Apologie.

***) Am allerwenigsten Octavius.

†) Cic. de orat. I, 16, 72. — Uebrigens gehörte diese urbanitas zu den Erfordernissen des ciceronianischen Redners, vgl. de orat. I, 5, 17: accedat codem oportet lepos quidam facetiaeque et eruditio libero digna ..... subtili venustate atque urbanitate conjuncta, welche letztere mit der von Octavius in malam partem gebrauchten urbanitas 16, 2. 28, 10 selbstverständlich nicht identisch ist.

te amat etc., was noch von dem bekannten zärtlichen Wortspiel übertroffen wird ad Attic. V, 20: Brutum non minus amo quam tu, paene dixi, quam te. Aehnlich auch hier. So in der zart gestellten Frage des Minucius an Cäcilius nach dem Grunde seiner plötzlichen Verstimmung 4, 1: Quid hoc est rei? cur non agnosco, Caecili, alacritatem tuam illam? et illam oculorum etiam in seriis hilaritatem requiro? Oder, wenn gegen Ende der überwundene Cäcilius so überraschend fein sich den Sieg zuschreibt, ohne ihn doch dem Octavius zu entreissen: Ego Octavio meo plurimum quantum, sed et mihi gratulor... vicimus et ita.. nam ut ille mei victor est, ita ego triumphator erroris, was sofort Minucius ebenso fein und zartfühlend zugleich zu wenden weiss: at ego prolixius omnium nostrum vice gaudeo, quod etiam mihi Octavius vicerit, cum maxima judicandi mihi invidia detracta sit. Besonders characteristisch für die urbane Höflichkeit ist folgender Satz, worin der Verfasser sogar auf seine Leser Rücksicht nimmt 4, 6: et cum dicto eius adsedimus, ita ut me ex tribus medium lateris ambitione protegerent: nec hoc obsequi fuit aut ordinis aut honoris, quippe cum amicitia pares semper aut accipiat aut faciat, sed ut arbiter et utrisque proximus aures darem et disceptantes duos medius segregarem. Jeder, der dies liest, freut sich der passenden Gruppirung: die zwei Gegner zu beiden Seiten des Unparteiischen. Niemand denkt an Absicht. Indessen, der feinfühlige Minucius, der seine Person durch jenen Mittel- und Ehrenplatz allzusehr in's Centrum der Aufmerksamkeit gerückt sieht, hält es für nöthig, sich gegen die etwaige Unterlegung einer selbstgefälligen Absicht vor seinen Lesern zu verwahren. Er fügt darum obigen Zusatz hinzu, der freilich etwas umständlich ausfällt, (nec aut-aut, quippe cum aut-aut, sed et-et), uns aber zeigt, wie sehr der Verfasser hier in der Einleitung beim Schreiben sein Leserpublicum im Auge hatte und auch diesem direct gegenüber seine Urbanität entfaltete*).

So sehen wir schon jetzt, auch in der Darstellung hat der Verfasser sich Cicero zum Vorbild genommen. Dies ist um so auffälliger, als zu Minucius' Zeit die Rednerschule Frontos die

*) Dieser Hang zur Höflichkeit und der damit verbundenen Lobrednerei verführt ihn öfter zur Breite und Schwülstigkeit. Man beachte wieder den Eingang und darin die Häufung lobender Beiwörter und Redensarten: Octavii boni et fidelissimi tanta dulcedo et affectio inhaesit — intimis sensibus — vir eximius et sanctus — immensum desiderium (bei Cic. nur triste) etc. Ferner in c. 2, 1

stilbeherrschende war, die für alterthümliche Litteratur und Sprachfärbung eingenommen, durch alle Arten von Archaismen die Rede zu würzen suchte*). Von dieser Sucht ist Minucius

die bis in's Kleinliche gehende Hervorhebung des Opfers, das ihm Oct. mit der Herreise gebracht hatte: nam negotii et visendi mei gratia Romam contenderat, relicta domo, conjuge, liberis, et quod est in liberis amabilius, adhuc annis innocentibus et adhuc dimidiata verba temptantibus, loquellam ipso offensantis linguae fragmine dulciorem. Schliesslich aber 2, 2 die schwülstige Schilderung der Freude über dessen Ankunft: non possum exprimere sermonibus, quanto quamque impatienti gaudio exultaverim, cum augeret maxime laetitiam meam amicissimi hominis inopinata praesentia. — Diese Ueberschwänglichkeit gleich in den ersten Capiteln des Dialoges hat etwas Gewaltsames an sich und fällt um so mehr auf, als sie der Sprache des eigentlichen Dialoges ganz fremd ist, der bei allem Reichthum der Diction sich durch Knappheit auszeichnet. Aber auch die referirten Facta, der dem Verfasser so zu Herzen gehende Todesfall und die innige Freundschaft des Octavius, verlieren an Naturwahrheit und Glaubwürdigkeit durch jene Entlehnung aus Cicero wie durch die sonstigen Anklänge an fremde Gedanken und Ausdrucksweise. Hierdurch wird uns der Verdacht nahe gelegt, dass dem Verfasser die Absicht beseelte, weniger zu referiren als zu interessiren. Dazu verhalfen allerdings jener sensationelle Todesfall, jene ideale Freundschaft, dazu auch die allerliebste Strandscene c. 3, deren ganzes Vorhandensein und deren unverhältnissmässige Länge (über ein Viertel der Einleitung) sich lediglich aus der Absicht, Interesse zu erregen, erklärt, sowie endlich auch kleinere Effectmittel wie in amoribus conscius und die Erwähnung jener kindlichen Sprachversuche c. 2. — Die dadurch wachgerufene Muthmassung, dass die Einleitung, vor allem die Person des Octavius fingirt sei, ward uns zur grössten Wahrscheinlichkeit durch folgende Beobachtungen. Es kann bei näherer Betrachtung niemandem entgehen, dass die zwei Disputanten ganz ungleich gezeichnet sind. Am gelungensten durchgeführt erscheint die Person des Cäcilius. Sie ist eine durch und durch einheitliche, lebenswahre Figur. Cäcilius ist ein heiterer, lebhafter, etwas excentrischer junger Mann, für den das von Minucius wie von Octavius gebrauchte erupit (16, 5. 40, 1) characteristisch ist. Sein Schmollen 4, 1: tacens, anxius, segregatus, seine plötzliche Herausforderung 4, 4: de toto et integro mihi cum Octavio res est und die Freude (renidens 14, 1) am Schlusse seiner eigenen Rede mit dem triumphirenden Schlussworte: ecquid ad haec audet Octavius etc., alles dieses sind characteristische Pinselstriche, die uns ein lebhaftes Bild von dem Manne ermöglichen und ohne Frage eine factisch existirende Persönlichkeit copiren.

Man vergleiche dagegen den Octavius. Was sagt er eigentlich ausserhalb seiner Rede? — Einen einzigen Satz, der überdies mit dem persönlich gehaltenen Eingang seiner Rede in schroffstem Widerspruch steht. Dieser eine Satz ist eigentlich ziemlich grob: Non boni viri est, hominem domi forisque lateri tuo inhaerentem sic in hac imperitiae vulgaris caecitate

*) Vgl. Teuffel S. 829. 856. A. Naber Epistulae Corn. Frontonis et M. Aurelii. Lipsiae 1867, p. III.

frei. Er steht so über seiner Zeit. Freilich in einer andern Beziehung vermochte er sich nicht so ganz ihren Fesseln zu entziehen. Die damals immer mehr in die Litteratur eindringende Volkssprache hat sich auch in seinen Octavius eingeschlichen und wehrt ihm so den Anspruch auf reinste Classicität. Man hat dies erst neuerdings beobachtet**). Namentlich sind es die abgeschwächten Gradationsformen, die hier in Betracht kommen. Ein Positiv neben dem Superlativ: boni et fidelissimi 1, 1 oder statt letzterem ein Comparativ: et quod est in liberis amabilius oder aber ein Superlativ für einen Positiv: utrum unius imperio an arbitrio plurimorum 18, 5 zeigen, wie sehr auch ihm wie der Volkssprache das Gefühl für Gradunterschiede verloren gegangen war. Dennoch ist aus der sonstigen reinen Latinität die Absicht unverkennbar, durch Zurückgehen auf die classischen Vorbilder, namentlich auf Cicero, sich der herrschenden Zeitrichtung zu entziehen, an sich schon ein Beweis von litterarischer Selbstständigkeit wie von gutem, stilistischen Geschmack.

Gehen wir auf seine Darstellung etwas näher ein. Jede der beiden Reden hat bei aller Unverkennbarkeit des gemeinschaft-

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deserere, ut tam luculento die in lapides eum patiaris inpingere, effigiatos sane ... cum scias huius erroris non minorem ad te quam ad ipsum redundare infamiam. Am Eingange aber seiner Rede zeigt er sich so überaus liebenswürdig und rücksichtsvoll gegen den nämlichen Cäcilius, dass Faber daraus sogar auf christliche Sanftmuth schliesst (Comm. S. 11) vgl. Oct. 16, 2: sed in Natali meo versutiam nolo, non credo: procul est ab eius simplicitate subtilis urbanitas. Sonst nirgends ein bezeichnender Ausdruck weder von ihm noch über ihn. Auch die oben angeführten Epitheta und Redensarten sind sämmtlich so subjectiv, so farblos (vgl. boni, fidelissimi, eximius, etc.), dass sie nirgends ein Bild von ihm in der Phantasie des Lesers aufkommen lassen.

Aus diesem Widerspruche in der Zeichnung der Person des Octavius wie ferner aus dem gänzlichen Fehlen charakteristischer Züge darin schliessen wir, unterstützt durch obige Verdachtsgründe, dass dem Verfasser bei Zeichnung dieser Person die lebendige Vorlage gänzlich gefehlt habe. Der Octavius ist vielmehr der Verfasser selbst, der bei der einmal gefassten Idee, den gesammten Stoff in die Form einer Disputation zu bringen, sich begreiflicherweise nicht selbst zum Helden derselben machen konnte — wir kennen ja seine persönliche Zurückhaltung dem Publikum gegenüber —, sondern die Person des O. fingirte und sich obiger Kunstmittel bediente, um seine Leser für denselben und somit für die Apologie selbst gleich von vorn herein zu interessiren. — Wie viel an der ganzen Disputation Faktum ist, ob sie überhaupt stattgefunden hat, ob sie zwischen Cäcilius und Minucius stattfand, wer wollte dies bestimmen?

*) Vgl. J. N. Ott Jahrb. für class. Philol. 111. S. 788—799.

lichen Verfassers ihren eignen Character. Erstere, als die Angriffsrede, ist gekennzeichnet durch rednerisches Pathos. Gleich am Anfang c. 5 zeigt sich dieses in der Fülle der Ausdrücke, der raschen Folge rhetorischer Fragen und der Häufung asyndetischer und anaphorischer Sätze*). Die im nächsten Theil, in der Vertheidigung väterlicher Religion zu verspürende Wärme steigt im dritten Theil zu glühender Leidenschaft gegen die Christen, namentlich im achten Capitel. Hier jagen sich Ausdrücke, alle asyndetisch aneinander gestellt, folgen sich von Ausrufen untermischt Antithese, Oxymoron und selbst Parodoxon: latebrosa et lucifuga natio, in publicum muta, in angelis garrula: templa ut busta despiciunt, deos despuunt, rident sacra, miserentur miseri ipsi, honores et purpuras despiciunt, ipsi seminudi. Pro mira stultitia et incredibilis audacia! Spernunt tormenta praesentia, dum incerta metuunt et futura, et dum mori post mortem timent, interim mori non timent! — Für den bestimmten rhetorischen Character der Rede spricht übrigens das Urtheil des Minucius selbst. Er gründet darauf das ganze Zwischengespräch c. 14—15, worin sowohl der verurtheilte eloquentiae tumor 15, 2 als auch Grundsätze wie 14, 2: cum non laudi sed veritati disceptatio vestra nitatur nicht nur ein Urtheil über die oratorische Leistung des Caecilius, sondern auch des Minucius' Abneigung gegen eine glänzende, aber wahrheitswidrige Rhetorik überhaupt enthalten. Darauf hin fällt die andere Rede weniger rhetorisch aus, wenigstens ist deren erster Theil, die philosophische Entwickelung, ganz in dem ruhigen Tone einer solchen gehalten. Doch schon im nächsten Hauptabschnitt, der Bekämpfung des Heidenthums, wird es lebendig. Sarkasmen und Ironien platzen gegen dasselbe los (c. 21 und 25), und gehen im dritten Abschnitt, bei der Zurückgabe der Vorwürfe an die Heiden, sogar in schneidigen Hohn über (c. 28). Im Uebrigen zeigt sich an gewissen Stellen, wie bei der Erörterung des Gottesbegriffes (c. 18 und 32), eine edle Wärme, die bei der Lehre von der Auferstehung und am Schluss (c. 34 und 38) sogar zur Sprache der Poesie sich steigert.

Die eigentliche Diction der Reden zeigt Gedrängtheit und Fülle zugleich. Minucius erreicht beides durch das Asyndeton und die Anaphora, besonders durch das sogenannte asyndeton tri-

*) Ein frappantes Beispiel anaphorischer Gedrängtheit ist der Satz 6, 2 mit dem doppelten sic und dem sechsfachen dum. Nur durch die Anaphora wird die Länge des Satzes entschuldigt.

membre, die hervorstechendste minucianische Spracheigenthümlichkeit. Minucius liebt es nämlich, mehrere Ausdrücke, gewöhnlich drei, in ein Bündel zusammen zu fassen, einen Gedanken gleichsam in drei Strahlen aufblitzen zu lassen. So gleich c. 16: errantem, vagam, lubricam — inlitteratos, pauperes, imperitos — sine dilectu aetatis, sexus, dignitatis etc. und so fast in jedem Capitel. Besonders evident ist folgende Stelle, zugleich ein Beispiel für die Figur der Symploke 23, 13: ecce funditur, fabricatur, sculpitur: nondum deus est: ecce plumbatur, construitur, erigitur: nec adhuc deus est: ecce ornatur, consecratur, oratur: tunc postremo deus est etc. So wird die Sprache lebendig und anschaulich, ohne doch breit zu werden. Als sonstiger Schmuck der Rede findet sich, namentlich in der Rede des Octavius, die Vergleichung 16, 3, 17, 11, in besonderer Schönheit die Metapher 16, 1, 34, 12, 38, 4 und kleinerer rhetorischer Zierrath, sogenannte commutationes 23, 1—2: nec desinunt vel perdere quod inveniunt vel invenire quod perdunt und gleich darauf nonne ridiculum vel lugere quod colas vel colere quod lugeas, sowie endlich ganz vereinzelt die Paronomasie: impietas expietur 38, 6. Zu dieser Darstellung in den zwei Reden kommt nun in der Einkleidung noch eine meisterhafte Schilderung der Natur (vergl. die reizende Strandscene c. 3), vornehmlich aber jene urbane Anmuth, welche der ganzen Einkleidung eigenthümlich ist und schliesslich dem Dialog einen überaus liebenswürdigen Abschluss giebt 40, 4: Post haec laeti hilaresque discessimus, Caecilius quod crediderit, Octavius gaudere quod vicerit, ego et quod hic crediderit et hic vicerit. Kann man treffender und anmuthiger zugleich recapituliren!

Aus alledem erkennen wir, wie gewandt unser Verfasser die Sprache zu handhaben verstand, wie genau er von den rhetorischen Darstellungsmitteln, auch dem Capitel von der elocutio unterrichtet war. Was wir besonders hoch schätzen müssen, das ist die weise und geschmackvolle Verwendung des gesammten Redeschmuckes, der überall durchscheinende Grundsatz, frei zu sein von aller Ueberladung, von aller rednerischen Ostentation*). Das ist's wohl, was er von Cicero gelernt hatte, was ihn diesem nahe

*) Er spricht diesen Grundsatz selbst aus. Vgl. ausser obigem Worte des Minucius: non laudi, sed veritati disceptatio nitatur, noch 16, 6 den gleichen Grundsatz des Octavius: atque etiam quo imperitior est sermo, hoc inlustrior ratio est, quoniam non fucatur pompa facundiae et gratiae, sed, ut est, recti regula sustinetur. Ein weiterer Beleg für die Identität des Minucius mit der Person des Octavius.

bringt und was ihn weit über seine Zeitgenossen, einen Fronto, Apulejus oder gar Gellius erhebt*). Fügen wir hierzu das Urtheil von J. F. Gronovius, dem alten leydener Professor der Beredtsamkeit, der unsern Verfasser, wenn nicht mit dem wirklichen, so doch mit dem christlichen Cicero Lactanz vergleicht**):

„Minucius Felix dialogum contra paganos scripsit lactea sermonis ubertate Lactantio nihil cedentem; mirabili ubique perspicuitate etiam in acute dictis, nihil argutiarum obscuritate molestarum, nihil intempestiva eruditionis ostentatione insolens aut arcessitum, nihil verborum novitate, aut transferendi improbitate aut compositionis scabitudine durum, horrens, abruptum. Omnia certe eius, in quibus quomodo legendum sit, non ambigitur, has habent virtutes. Argumentum ingens, illa quoque, quae labem contraxerunt, ita esse curanda, ut non in Minucio Minucium quaeras, Tertullianum aut quemvis durissimum Afrorum invenias.“

Keineswegs aber bleibt seine Kenntniss auf das Gebiet ciceronianischer Schriften beschränkt. Zahlreiche Namen und Anklänge auch aus anderen litterarischen Gebieten sind zu verzeichnen. Aus dem Bereiche der Beredtsamkeit kommt, ausser Cicero und Demosthenes, welcher letztere nur flüchtig erwähnt wird (26, 6), zunächst Fronto aus Cirta in Betracht. Das erste Mal (9, 6) wird seine oratio, dann (31, 1) der orator selbst genannt. Das Urtheil (31, 1): convicium ut orator adspersit enthält zugleich eine abfällige Kritik gegen die Redner überhaupt. Wahrscheinlich ist ferner die Bekanntschaft des Verfassers mit Apulejus, speciell mit dessen Metamorphosen***). Mit ihm theilt er auch manche formelle Eigenthümlichkeit. Von anderen Zeitgenossen nennen wir hier den Celsus, dessen λόγος ἀληθής Minucius nach Keims

*) Was Fronto an Cicero auszusetzen hat, ist gerade das, worin er seine Stärke sucht, aber seine Schwäche zeigt: in omnibus eius in orationibus paucissima admodum reperias insperata atque inopinata verba, quae nonnisi cum studio atque vigilia atque multa veterum carminum memoria indagantur. Vgl. Teuffel S. 829, 856 u. 863.

**) Abgedruckt in der Ausgabe des Oct. von Jac. Gronovius, Leyden 1709.

***) Vgl. Met. 4, 14. Oct. 31, 6. Die andere Aehnlichkeit 8, 27, Oct. 27, 3 ist wohl weniger auf Entlehnung als auf gemeinsame Erfahrung zurückzuführen. Dahin weist wenigstens die anschauliche Schilderung mit ihren präsentischen Ausdrücken. Das Gleiche gilt von der ähnlichen Stelle Lucan 5, 169 f, bes. v. 172. — Ueber die formellen Eigenthümlichkeiten vgl. Ott und Dombart (Anhang) wie auch Teuffel S. 863.

Ansicht gekannt und dessen Vorwürfe gegen das Christenthum er zum Theil dem Cäcilius in den Mund gelegt haben soll*). Endlich aber führen wir den Athenagoras mit an, dessen Verhältniss zu Minucius Felix im Interesse der Priorität des griechischen Apologeten neuerdings Lösche in d. Jahrb. für prot. Theol. 1882, 1. S. 168—178, näher beleuchtet hat**).

Häufigere Verwendung als die Redner finden die Dichter***). Aus ihrer Mitte hebt sich deutlich der „Mantuanus Maro" hervor,

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*) Theod. Keim: Celsus' „wahres Wort." Zürich 1873. S. 156. Darüber Näheres weiter unten.

**) Die Annahme von Entlehnung ist zwar formell wie materiell diesem Apologeten mehr als andern gegenüber berechtigt, grenzt auch in Einzelheiten wie c. 10 vgl. Oct. 18, 7. c. 12 vgl. 38, 4. c. 21 vgl. 23, 3 und öfter in der Charakteristik der Dämonen an Wahrscheinlichkeit, doch ist sie unseres Erachtens aus dem Vorliegenden nicht mit Sicherheit zu constatiren. Manches Gemeinsame erklärt sich aus der gemeinsamen Erfahrung, wie die ungerechte Verurtheilung der Christen Ath. 1. 2. 35. Oct. 28, sowie die Lächerlichkeit der so mannigfachen Götterculte Ath. 14. Oct. 6. Ath. 15. Oct. 23. Ath. 21. 30. Oct. 21. 23. Ath. 23. 30. Oct. 21. Ath. 20. Oct. 20. Es flossen ja deren so viele und verschiedene in der Hauptstadt zusammen (Oct. 6) und schon längst hatte sich innerhalb des Heidenthums selber über sie ein derartiges Urtheil gebildet. Vgl. den ciceronianischen Cotta de n. D. III. selbst den Epikureer Vellejus I. 16, 42—43 und den Stoiker Balbus II. 27, 70. Einiges kann auch zu andern Apologeten in Beziehung gebracht werden. So die Entwickelung über das Dasein Gottes Oct. 17—18, vgl. Theoph. ad. Aut. I. 2—6 oder die Gründe für die Opferunterlassung Oct. 32, vgl. Just. I. 9 u. 13. Manches geht auch bei der Belesenheit des Apologeten auf antike Quellen zurück, wie die Beispiele aus Homer, den Minucius sicher kannte, Ath. 21. Oct. 23, 3 u. 5, wohl auch die Klage der Isis und das Schlagen der Brüste Ath. 14. Oct. 22, vgl. Juvenal 6, 533 mit dem bezeichnenden grege calvo plangentis populi etc. Ohne Frage aber weisen folgende Aehnlichkeiten nicht auf apologetische, sondern auf classische Quellen hin. So auf Seneca: Ath. 31. Oct. 36, 8, vgl. de prov. 4, 6. 3, 4 f. u. Ath. 12. Oct. 36, 9, vgl. de prov. 2, 6 f. Auf Cicero aber: Diagoras als Beispiel eines Atheisten Ath. 4. Oct. 8, vgl. de nat. Deor. I, 23. 63 (ἄθεος); der ganze Euhemerismus Ath. 17. 18. 28. 29. 30. Oct. 19. 20. 21. 29, vgl. de n. D. I. 42, 118 f. I. 15, 38. II. 23, 60; die physiologische Behandlung der Mythologie Ath. 22. Oct. 19, vgl. de n. D. I. 14—15; die Providenz Ath. 4. 7. 10 etc. Oct. 17. 18, vgl. de n. D. II. (Vgl. das Einzelne bei Behr S. 15 f.); schliesslich aber ist der von Loesche so ausdrücklich hervorgehobene (S. 169) Vergleich vom wohlgeordneten Hause Oct. 18, 4 nicht auf Ath. 16, 1 zurückzuführen, sondern unfraglich auf de n. D. II, 5, 15, vgl. 6, 16 (dessen charakterisches melius der Apologet nicht unberücksichtigt gelassen hat).

***) Bei dieser wie auch den folgenden Zusammenstellungen haben wir die Angaben der Dombart'schen Ausgabe benutzt.

der nicht nur am auffälligsten verwendet*), sondern auch als der einzige von ihnen ausdrücklich citirt wird: Aen. 6, 724 ff., 1, 743. Georg. 4, 221; vgl. Oct. 19, 1. Genannt wie benutzt wird ferner Homer**), den Minucius genau gekannt zu haben scheint (23, 2 f.), sodann Ennius genannt, ohne citirt (26, 6), sowie Terenz citirt, ohne genannt zu werden (21, vgl. Eunuch 4, 5, 6). Letzteres geschieht nach Cicero de div. 56, 116 vgl. de nat. D. 2, 23, 60. Sonst begegnen wir zahlreichen Anklängen an Ovids Fasten und Metamorphosen, an Juvenal, namentlich dessen 6. und 15. Satire***), sowie mehr oder weniger augenscheinlichen Berührungen mit Lucrez, Horaz, Tibull, Lucan und Martial †). Auch mag Minucius an gewissen Stellen den Hesiod und den Euripides im Sinne gehabt haben ††). Ausserdem kommen neben Hesiod die Namen des Orpheus (19, 11) und Plautus vor (14, 1), die aber für unseren Zweck nichts verrathen. Dass ferner der Verfasser mit noch weiterem poetischen Material dienen konnte, beweist von mehreren praeteritiones wenigstens die eine 7, 5, omitto vetera, quae multa sunt et de deorum natalibus, donis, muneribus neglego carmina poetarum, die man ihrer Ausführlichkeit wegen nicht für eine blosse Redensart zu halten hat. Für seine Kenntniss in Sonderheit dramatischer Litteratur sprechen endlich noch allgemeine Ausdrücke wie: memo-

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*) Wörtliche Anklänge: Aen. 3, 137. Oct. 5, 10. 6, 797. Oct. 6, 2. 7, 717. Oct. 7, 4. 7, 606. Oct. 7, 4. 8, 187. Oct. 9, 2. 8, 321 u. 357. Oct. 21, 6. 8, 424 f. Oct. 23, 6. 8, 635. Oct. 25, 3. 9, 105. Oct. 35, 2.

**) In c. 23 allein folgende Anklänge: Il. 20, 67 f. 5, 386. 385 f. 855 f. 1, 396 f. 16, 459. 14, 315 f. 21, 443 f. Aber auch die Odyssee hat ihm vorgelegen: 18, 136. Oct. 19, 1. 11, 303 f. Oct. 22, 7. 8, 266 f. Oct. 23, 3.

***) Ovid: Met. 1, 84. Oct. 17, 2. 10, 155 f. Oct. 23, 7 u. ö. Fast. 5, 13 f. Oct. 5, 2. 6. 769 f. Oct. 22, 7 u. ö.

Juv. 2, 17 (Oct. 4, 1). 6, 533 f. 8, 29 (22, 1). 6, 512 (24, 4). 6, 489 (25, 11). 9, 24 (25, 11). 15, 1 (25, 9). 15, 9 (28, 9). 15, 116 (30, 4). 10, 104 (37, 7).

†) Lucr. de rer. nat. 1, 248 f. 2, 1100 f. 6, 417 f. vgl. Oct. 5. Dann 5, 407. vgl. Oct. 34, 3.

Horaz Od. I. 3, 38. Oct. 5, 6.

Tibull 1, 3, 89. 2, 5, 11. Oct. 21, 7. 27, 1.

Lucan 1, 111. Oct. 18, 6 allerdings concurrirend mit Florus 4, 2 f.

Mart. 2, 61. Oct. 28, 11. Evident.

††) Hesiod op. 122 f. (Oct. 26, 8). Eurip. Alc. 8 (Oct. 23, 5). Mit alibi nämlich wird von Homer auf einen andern Dichter gewiesen. Das Angeführte aber findet sich nur bei diesem.

moriae et tragoediae vestrae 31, 3, als auch die eingehende Schilderung des lasciven und gottlosen Treibens auf der Bühne 37, 12.

Die Fülle von geschichtlichen Beispielen und Anspielungen zeugt aber weiterhin von seiner Kenntniss der Historiker. Minucius nennt von ihnen den Nepos, Cassius (Hemina), Thallus und Diodorus (Siculus), als Vertreter der „omnes scriptores vetustatis Graeci Romanique“ (21, 4). Dazu kommen die Namen des Flavius Josephus (jedenfalls ein Glossem, vgl. Halm S. 47), und Antonius Julianus, deren Lectüre Octavius dem Cäcilius statt der jüdischen Schriften*) anempfiehlt (33, 4). Offenbare Verwendung findet, ohne genannt zu sein, Livius, namentlich im 6. und 7. Capitel des Octavius, wo mit der Weisung specta de libris memorias sicher zunächst auf dessen historiarum libri hingedeutet wird. Neben Livius aber findet sich Herodot benutzt, auf dessen Urheberschaft wohl die empfangene Notiz von dem unreinen Gefässe (dem ποδανιπτήρ des Amasis) wie auch die erwähnte Todesstrafe für die Vernichtung heiliger Thiere in Egypten zurückzuführen ist**). Fernerhin kommt Florus in Betracht, vielleicht auch Valerius Maximus und Sueton. Endlich ist noch, wenn auch entfernter, an Plinius, Sallust und Cäsar zu denken***). Nicht zu ermitteln ist die Quelle über Hostanes (c. 26, 11) und von dem Briefe Alexanders (21, 3), der nach dem Epitheton insignis ziemlich bekannt gewesen sein muss und auch von Athenagoras, dem ein-

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*) Mit alttestamentlichen Schriften — natürlich in der Version — scheint er bekannt gewesen zu sein, wie auch einige Anspielungen an alttestamentliche Stellen im Laufe der Rede wahrscheinlich machen. Welche Aehnlichkeiten mit der heiligen Schrift überhaupt bemerkt worden sind, zeigen von den Neueren vornehmlich Dombart o. und Dräseke Brief an Diognet, Jahrb. für prot. Theol. 1881. No. 3. S. 450—459.

**) Für Ersteres vgl. das ut accepimus 23, 12. Für Letzteres aber (28, 8) vgl. Herod. II, 172 ff. II, 65 ff.

***) Florus 1, 13. Oct. 6, 3, wohl eher denkbar als Liv. 5, 46, ferner 4, 2. Oct. 18, 6, allerdings, wie bemerkt, mit Lucan 1, 111 concurrirend.

Val. Max. 1, 8, 1. Oct. 7, 3. 1, 6, 7. Oct. 26, 3.

Sueton Vesp. 23. Oct. 21, 10.

Plinius h. n. 2, 7, 16. Oct. 28, 9. 30, 1, 8. Oct. 26, 11. 35, 12, 165. Oct. 24, 4. Doch ist Entlehnung nicht wahrscheinlich. Erstere und letztere Stelle müssen vor dem sicher benutzten Juvenal (6, 512. 15, 9) zurücktreten; die mittlere, die noch am meisten für Entlehnung sprechen könnte, aber gleichfalls, da Minucius über Hostanes zu viel selbstständige Kenntniss aufweist.

Sallust. Cat. 22. Oct. 30, 5.

Caesar B. G. 6, 16. Oct. 30, 4.

zigen unter den gleichzeitigen Apologeten, der ihn erwähnt, als solcher angesehen wird (Suppl. c. 28, vgl. dazu August. de civ. Dei 8, 5).

Leichter wird es uns, die Quelle anzugeben bei den nun folgenden Philosophen. Wir haben sie grossentheils bei Cicero, speziell in dessen de nat. Deor. zu suchen. Minucius hat sich's unfraglich hier bequem gemacht. Doch würde man irren, wollte man ihm deshalb alles eigne philosophische Verständniss absprechen. Wie sehr er selbst noch in philosophischen Vorstellungen lebt und webt, das wird der nächste Theil der Abhandlung genügend erkennen lassen. Aber auch in dem, was er hier an philosophischem Material bringt, verräth er eingehendere Kenntniss und Selbstständigkeit des Urtheils.

Lassen wir den stattlichen Philosophenreigen an uns vorüberziehen. Er theilt sich in sechs Gruppen, deren mittelste nicht weniger als 21 Philosophen zählt. Nach Vorantritt des Sokrates (c. 5), der zwar nicht namhaft, doch durch das vetus sapientis oraculum kenntlich gemacht wird, folgen c. 8 die drei Gottesleugner Theodor von Cyrene, Diagoras von Melos und Protagoras aus Abdera, allerdings nicht, um Cäcilius, dem Skeptiker, gegen die Gewissheit der heidnischen Religion als Zeugen zu dienen, sondern von Cäcilius, dem Vertreter altheidnischer Tradition getadelt zu werden*). In der zweiten Gruppe (c. 13) befinden sich ausser dem diesmal genannten Sokrates noch Arcesilaus, Carneades nebst den plurimis Academicorum, wie auch der Lyriker Simonides, den wir nach Ciceros Vorgang den Philosophen zuzählen können**). Alle die Genannten — ausgenommen Sokrates — sind mit ihren Ansichten zum Theil wörtlich aus Cicero herübergenommen. Nur weniges daran ist selbstständig. Indessen, es fehlt nicht, sei es nun in dem längeren Passus über Sokrates 13, 1—2, oder in kleinen, aber beweisenden chronologischen Notizen, wie 8, 2: sit licet

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*) Diese zwei Seiten der cäcilianischen Anschauung, Skepsis und Tradition, bilden eben den von Oct. gerügten Widerspruch in der Rede des Cäcilius 16, 1—2. — Indess wird deren Unglaube an die heidnischen Götter — dem christlichen gegenüber! — bedeutend abzuschwächen gesucht, indem ersteren Beiden in allgemeiner Sentenz (numquam pollebunt) jeder factische Erfolg abgesprochen, die Gotteslästerung des Letzteren aber mehr auf Forschungstrieb als auf Frivolität zurückgeführt wird (consulte magis quam profane).

**) Vgl. Cic. de n. D. 1, 22: non enim poeta solum suavis verum etiam ceteroqui doctus sapiensque traditur.

ille Theodorus Cyrenaeus vel qui prior Diagoras Melius (jener lebte unter Ptolemäus Lagi [† 283], dieser um die Mitte des 5. Jahrhunderts, als Zeitgenosse von Demokrit, Protagoras und Sokrates), oder wie 13, 3: Arcesilaus et multo post Carneades (jener 316—241, dieser 214—129).

Die dritte Reihe, die grösste, enthält folgende Namen (c. 19):

1. Thales.
2—3. Anaximenes. Diogenes Apolloniates.
4—6. Anaxagoras. Pythagoras. Xenophanes.
7—8. Antisthenes. Speusippus.
9—11. Demokrit. Straton. Epikur.
12—14. Aristoteles. Heraklides Ponticus. Theophrast.
15—18. Zenon. Chrysippus. Cleanthes. Diogenes Babylonius.
19—21. Xenophon. Ariston. Plato.

Ein flüchtiger Blick darauf überzeugt uns, dass es dem Verfasser nicht um eine chronologische, sondern rein sachliche Zusammenstellung zu thun war. Höchstens der Anfang lässt eine chronologische Reihenfolge erwarten, sowohl Thales, qui primus de caelestibus disputavit, als vornehmlich die vorausgehende Präteritio jener rudes et veteres, qui de dictis suis sapientes esse meruerunt (19, 4). Gemeint sind die sogenannten sieben Weisen mit ihren ethischen Kernsprüchen. Der Ausdruck rudes, sowie deren Ausschliessung aus der Reihe der Philosophen beweist, dass Minucius sie als solche nicht eigentlich anerkenne und darum die übliche Bezeichnung derselben nicht recht billige. Er lässt deutlich herausblicken, dass zu einem rechten Philosophen noch etwas mehr gehöre als blosse dicta, einzelne Aussprüche, die ein Stück praktischer Lebensweisheit enthalten, aber eben so weit entfernt sind von einer spekulativen Betrachtung des Alls, wie von einer systematischen Behandlung der gewonnenen Resultate. Gleich dies ist ein selbstständiges Stück mit einem ganz treffenden Urtheil. Man vergleiche dazu den bei Diog. Laert. I, 40 erhaltenen Ausspruch des Philosophen Dicäarch, der obige „Weisen“ οὔτε σοφοὺς οὔτε φιλοσόφους, συνετοὺς δέ τινας καὶ νομοθετικοὺς bezeichnet*), also grade so, wie Minucius, den Philosophentitel ihnen abspricht.

Auch im Folgenden finden sich Spuren eigenen Wissens. So der Zusatz bei Demokrit: quamvis atomorum primus inventor, ferner das Urtheil über Epikur, der bei Cicero ganz fehlt, sodann

*) Vgl. Ueberweg, Grundriss der Gesch. der Philos. 6. Aufl. 1880. I. S. 30.

die eingehendere Darlegung von Zenons physiologischer Interpretation*), namentlich aber in der Behandlung der drei letzten Philosophen dieser Gruppe. Schien nämlich schon in der Erwähnung der Ansicht Xenophons der bei Cicero nicht vorhandene Vordersatz mit der hieran geknüpften Folgerung: formam Dei veri negat videri posse et ideo quaeri non oportere auf die Quelle Memor. 4, 3, 13 ff. hinzudeuten, so verweist uns der Excurs über Plato direkt auf dessen Timäus und zwar, wie ausdrücklich bemerkt wird, auf den Anfang desselben (praefatur.) Unschwer erkennt man in den Worten mundi parens, artifex, fabricator, platonische Ausdrücke wie *ποιητής καὶ πατήρ* 28 C. *τεκταινόμενος* und *δημιουργός* 29 A. speziell in dem artifex animae den Bildner der Weltseele, wie er gleichfalls am Anfang der Rede des Timäus 30 B. 34 B—36 D. hervortritt, vor allem aber in dem Satze: quem et invenire difficile prae nimia et incredibili potestate, et cum inveneris, in publicum dicere impossibile die platonische Stelle 28 C.: *τὸν μὲν οὖν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς εὑρεῖν τε ἔργον καὶ εὑρόντα εἰς πάντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν.*

Nachdem ferner Minucius c. 23 ganz vereinzelt Platos Staat**) und dessen Abneigung gegen Homer erwähnt hat, eine Stelle, die entweder auf Plat. resp. III, 9 oder auf Cic. Tusc. II, 11, 27 zurückgeht, führt er uns c. 26 eine vierte Philosophengruppe vor: Sokrates, den Magier Hostanes, der hier mit genannt sein mag, und abermals Plato, sämmtlich von Cicero unabhängig, zum Theil sogar abweichend. Während nämlich in dessen de div. I. 54, 122 (übrigens nach Plat. Apol. 19) bestimmt hervorgehoben wird, dass Sokrates seinem Dämonion: numquam impellenti, saepe revocanti gehorcht habe, heisst es bei Minucius: Socrates novit, qui ad nutum et arbitrium adsistentis sibi daemonis vel declinabat vel petebat. Wir erklären uns diese Abweichung aus dem Zurückgehen auf den ungewöhnlicheren, aber hier sowohl zweckdien-

*) Was nämlich Cicero 1, 14, 36 nur allgemein angiebt, specialisirt Minucius 19, 10. Cic.: neque enim Jovem neque Junonem neque Vestam neque quemquam, qui ita appellatur, in deorum habet numero, sed rebus inanimis atque mutis per quandam significationem haec docet tributa nomina. Min.: idem interpretando Junonem aera, Jovem caelum, Neptunum mare, ignem esse Vulcanum et ceteros similiter vulgi deos elementa esse monstrando publicum arguit graviter et revincit errorem.

**) Der Ausdruck: quam in sermone instituebat ist vielleicht nicht ohne Absicht gesagt und birgt wohl die geheime Andeutung in sich, dass ein in re institui desselben nicht recht möglich war.

licheren, wie auch neben obiger Aehnlichkeit naheliegenden Bericht bei Xenoph. mem. 4, 3, 12 (vgl. 1, 4, 15): *προσημαίνουσί σοι (θεοὶ) ἅτε χρὴ ποιεῖν καὶ ἃ μή.* Ueber die Ansicht des Hostanes haben wir schon bemerkt, dass sie nicht wohl aus Plinius stammen könne, trotzdem dieser sogar von zwei Magieren dieses Namens zu erzählen weiss. Freilich darf daraus auf eine direkte Kenntniss von dessen Schriften (Plin. 30, 1, 14) noch nicht geschlossen werden. Jedenfalls aber weiss Minucius mehr von ihm wie Tatian, der einzige unter den gleichzeitigen Apologeten, der jenen noch anführt (vgl. ad Gr. c. 17). Aus Plato endlich bringt Minucius ausser einer Reminiscenz*) an obige Stelle im Timäus, in Anknüpfung hieran (sine negotio), das Symposion mit herein, speziell Symp. 202 E. Hier heisst's: *πᾶν δαιμόνιον μεταξύ ἐστι θεοῦ τε καὶ θνητοῦ,* insbesondere vom Dämon *Ἔρως*: er ist *μεταξὺ θνητοῦ καὶ ἀθανάτου.* Während aber bei Plato nicht weiter auf dieses Verhältniss der beiden Begriffe eingegangen, sondern mit *τίνα δύναμιν ἔχον* zu einer anderen Frage fortgeschritten wird, bleibt Minucius grade hier länger stehen und erklärt dieses Verhältniss: id est inter corpus et spiritum mediam (substantiam), terreni ponderis et caelestis levitatis admixtione concretam, ex qua monet etiam... nos procupidinem amoris et dicit informari et inlabi pectoribus humanis et sensum movere et adfectus fingere et ardorem cupiditatis infundere. Ein Blick auf folgendes Capitel mit seiner dämonischen Einwirkung auf die Menschen, auf deren Körper (2) und Geist (8), sagt uns auch den Grund dafür: er zielt auf die instigatio daemonum, sucht hier eine physiologische Erklärung dafür zu geben und nach seiner Gewohnheit am Ausgang eines Capitels das folgende bereits vorzubereiten. Dass ihm aber hierzu obige Stelle des Symposion und auch das Nächstfolgende (ausser höchstens 203), zu wenig Stoff bot, ist klar. Daher griff Minucius, ohne aus dem Rahmen des Symposion herauszugehen, zu anderen Stellen, die ihm dienlicher schienen, und fährt mit monet und dicit fort, Plato zu citiren, indem er das dort von dem einzelnen Dämon Eros Gesagte auf das Gattungswesen überträgt. Anders wenigstens können wir uns die sehr corrupte Stelle nicht erklären. So bezog er sich wohl bei dem folgenden Citate zunächst auf Symp. 196 A, wo Agathon vom Eros sagt, dass er von sehr geschmeidiger Gestalt sei (*ὑγρὸς τὸ εἶδος* vgl. *ὑγρᾶς ἰδέας*) und leicht in die Gemüther und

*) Qui invenire Deum negotium (*ἔργον* 28 C.) credidit.

Seelen eindringe, um dort zu wohnen: οἷός τε πάντῃ περιπτύσσεσθαι, διὰ πάσης ψυχῆς εἰσιὼν λανθάνειν, vgl. 195 E: ἐν γὰρ ἤθεσι καὶ ψυχαῖς θεῶν καὶ ἀνθρώπων τὴν οἴκησιν ἵδρυται, was unserem informari et inlabi pectoribus entspricht. Auch die Einwirkung des Dämons auf die Sinnlichkeit kann auf Vorausgehendes zurückgeführt werden, durch die Annahme, dass Minucius speziell an den Ἔρως πάνδημος, Sohn der gleichnamigen Aphrodite gedacht und auch dessen Sinne und Sinnlichkeit anregende Function jenem Mittelwesen im Allgemeinen übertragen habe (181 B). So wählte Minucius aus dieser Schrift Platos aus, was er für seinen Zweck brauchte. Diese bedachte Auswahl aber beweist seine nähere Kenntniss von ihr.

Doch wenden wir uns zu der fünften Gruppe (c. 34). Es mag unsere letzte sein, da die sechste (c. 38), sich mit einziger Ausnahme des Pyrrho als Wiederholung der c. 13 Genannten herausstellt. Die jetzige enthält als Zeugen für die Lehre vom Weltbrand die Stoiker, Epikureer und Plato, für die Lehre von der Seelenwanderung den Pythagoras und wiederum Plato. Bei der Erwähnung der stoischen ἐκπύρωσις folgt Minucius noch einmal seinem Gewährsmann Cicero (II. 46, 118), bei der epikureischen Ansicht vielleicht dem Lucrez (5, 407 f. vgl. aber noch Ovid Met. 1, 256 f.). Doch geht er auf die Quelle zurück bei Erwähnung der platonischen Lehre 34, 4: loquitur Plato: partes orbis nunc inundare dicit, nunc alternis vicibus ardescere, et cum ipsum mundum perpetuum et insolubilem diceret esse fabricatum, addidit tamen, ipsi artifici Deo soli et solubilem et esse mortalem. Behr behauptet zwar S. 32, indem er von der Voraussetzung ausgeht, dass Minucius auch hier dem Cicero I. 8, 20*) gefolgt sei: „Minucius hat hier also Cicero weniger gewissenhaft benutzt und wir müssen einräumen, dass er der platonischen Lehre nicht gerecht geworden ist.“ Aber eine Vergleichung der beiden Stellen ergiebt, dass Minucius hier den Cicero gar nicht benutzt hat. Bei diesem ist nur von einer Ewigkeit schlechthin die Rede, doch der Timäus enthält in der That Stellen, die diesen Satz einschränken. Ueber die Feuer- und Wasserzerstörung 22 C: πολλαὶ καὶ κατὰ πολλὰ φθοραὶ γεγόνασιν ἀνθρώπων καὶ ἔσονται, πυρὶ μὲν καὶ ὕδατι μέγισται etc. Die nur relative Ewigkeit der Welt aber findet sich

*) Cic.: si alia est, cur mortalem fecerit mundum, non quemadmodum Platonicus deus sempiternum.

direkt ausgesprochen 41 A: *τὸ μὲν οὖν δὴ δεθὲν πᾶν λυτόν* vgl. auch 38 B: *χρόνος μετ' οὐρανοῦ γέγονεν, ἵνα ἅμα γεννηθέντες ἅμα καὶ λυθῶσιν, ἄν ποτε λύσις τις αὐτῶν γίγνηται,* welcher Vergänglichkeit selbst die unsterblichen Götter ausgesetzt sind 41 B: *ἀθάνατοι μὲν οὐκ ἐστὲ οὐδ' ἄλυτοι τὸ πάμπαν.* Volle Unvergänglichkeit kam ja dem Entstandenen nach platonischer Ansicht gar nicht zu, vgl. 37 D: *ἡ μὲν οὖν τοῦ ζώου φύσις ἐτύγχανεν οὖσα αἰώνιος, καὶ τοῦτο μὲν δὴ τῷ γεννητῷ παντελῶς προσάπτειν οὐκ ἦν δυνατόν.* Sonach ist Minucius hier nur dem Cicero nicht gerecht geworden. Er zeigt sich durchaus als einen Kenner des platonischen Timäus, ja Platos überhaupt. Wir haben daher allen Grund, anzunehmen, dass er auch die platonische Seelenwanderungslehre (34, 6) aus der Quelle kannte. Die dem Wortlaut am nächsten kommenden Stellen sind Tim. 42 B f. und bezüglich der Rückkehr in bestimmte Thierkörper Phäd. 81 E—82 A.

Hiermit ist die eigentliche Philosophenreihe zu Ende. Doch müssen wir noch eines Nachzüglers gedenken, der zwar ohne Namen, aber nicht ohne sichtliches Interesse von Minucius benutzt worden ist. Es ist Seneca. Zwei ganze Capitel (36, 37) sind in seinem Geiste gehalten und voll seiner Worte und Wendungen. Besonders ist es der kleine Dialog de providentia, der dem Minucius vorgelegen hat, daneben die uns verloren gegangene, aber noch bruchstücksweise bei Augustin erhaltene Schrift de superstitione und vielleicht auch Senecas Briefe. Da wir später auf die Aehnlichkeiten näher ein gehen werden, so wollen wir uns hier mit der Anführung der hauptsächlichsten Parallelstellen begnügen*). De prov. 2, 7 f. Oct. 37, 1 f. De prov. 4, 6. 5, 9. 6, 6. Oct. c. 36. De superst. bei Aug. de civ. Dei 6, 10 f., vgl. Oct. 25, 7 und 24, 4. Moral. phil. bei Lact. inst. 6, 25, vgl. Sen. ep. 95, 47 und 41, 1. Oct. c. 32. Exhort. bei Lact. inst. 3, 15, Oct. 38, 5.

Blicken wir noch einmal auf jenen Philosophenzug zurück, so fallen uns besonders zwei Gestalten auf, die Minucius selbst vor den anderen ausgezeichnet hatte: der so oft benutzte Seneca und der so oft genannte Plato. Ist es erlaubt, aus der Sonderstellung dieser Beiden auf ein besonderes philosophisches Interesse des Verfassers zu schliessen, so kann dasselbe nur auf den Stoicismus und Platonismus gerichtet sein. In der That werden im nächsten Abschnitt beide und zwar als Hauptbestandtheile minucianischer Anschauung uns wieder begegnen.

*) Vgl. auch Dombart Anhang, S. 135—137.

Nach alle diesem nun ist es offenbar, dass wir in Minucius Felix einen Mann vor uns haben von ausgedehnter heidnischer Bildung, von feinster Urbanität, von grösster rednerischer Gewandtheit und Anmuth, einen Freund der classischen Form und Kenner beider Litteraturen, römischer und griechischer, auf dem Gebiete der Poesie wie der Geschichte, wie der Philosophie. Man begreift daher, mit welchem Rechte Hieronymus von unserem causidicus sagen konnte: Minucius Felix, causidicus Romani fori, in libro, cui titulus Octavius est... quid gentilium scripturarum dimisit intactum? Erinnern wir uns von hier aus des oben aufgestellten ciceronianischen Gegensatzes von einem causidicus und einem orator, so sehen wir uns jetzt am Schlusse genöthigt, scharf zu scheiden zwischen unserem und dem ciceronianischen causidicus, ja, wäre zu entscheiden, sogar berechtigt, unserem causidicus das Prädicat eines orator zuzuerkennen, im Sinne einer umfassenden, vorzugsweise rhetorischen Bildung.

Dies ist der heidnische Boden seiner Geistesbildung. Sehen wir zu, wie weit das Christenthum darin aufgegangen ist.

Der Philosoph und der Christ.

A. Dem Akademiker gegenüber.

Wir haben im vorausgehenden Theile bereits genügend von dem Vorhandensein philosophischer Elemente Einsicht nehmen können. Wir werden uns hier aber überzeugen, dass diese den wesentlichen Bestandtheil der Apologie ausmachen, ja durch deren ganze Anlage bedingt sind.

Die Apologie ist nicht bloss die Widerlegung einer Reihe heidnischer Vorwürfe, wie die Schutzschriften Justins, Athenagoras' u. A., sondern in ihr stehen Heidenthum und Christenthum in zwei Personen redend einander gegenüber. Hierbei aber ist auffällig, dass der Gegner des Christen nicht nur im Allgemeinen ein Heide ist, sondern ein Philosoph und auch nicht nur dies, sondern der Anhänger einer ganz bestimmten philosophischen Schule, der mittleren Akademie, 5, 2, 13, 5*). Damit erhält

*) Wir billigen nicht, dass Paul de Félice den Cäcilius einen Epikureer nennt. S. 26: Cécilius n'est point un homme ignorant. Sans appartenir précisément à aucune école de philosophes, il les connait un peu toutes. Pour

auch die Widerlegung von vornherein eine ganz bestimmte und, dürfen wir sagen, schiefe Richtung. Der Christ, so muss man voraussetzen, wird auf die Vorwürfe des Philosophen nothwendig eingehen, erwidern und somit selbst als Philosoph erscheinen, andrerseits aber als Gegner speziell eines Akademikers in Gefahr gerathen, auf jene Seite gedrängt zu werden, wo schon seit Alters her ein Gegner akademischer Skepsis stand — zum Stoicismus.

In der That hat die Widerlegung diese schiefe Richtung eingeschlagen, der Christ erscheint durchaus als Philosoph und im Wesentlichen durchaus als Stoiker. Dies wird das Folgende zeigen.

Nachdem Octavius in dem persönlichen Eingang seiner Rede den Widerspruch zwischen dem Prinzip der Skepsis und der religiösen Tradition in der Rede des Gegners aufgedeckt, beginnt er seine eigne mit der Widerlegung jenes cäcilianischen Cardinalvorwurfs: des Mangels an aller höheren Bildung der Christen und ihrer gänzlichen Unbefugniss zu philosophischer Spekulation. Dem gegenüber macht er auf's Entschiedenste seine Grundsätze geltend und zwar nicht nur von der allgemeinen Berechtigung der Menschen dazu, sondern sogar von der Pflicht derselben, womit er gleichzeitig die rechte Methode der Spekulation verbindet.

Die allgemeine Berechtigung ruht auf dem Grunde allgemein menschlicher Befähigung dazu, 16, 5: et quoniam meus frater erupit, aegre se ferre... inperitos de rebus caelestibus disputare, sciat omnes homines sine dilectu aetatis, sexus, dignitatis rationis et sensus capaces et habiles procreatos nec fortuna nanctos, sed natura insitos esse sapientiam: quin ipsos etiam philosophos, vel si qui alii artium repertores in memorias exierunt, priusquam sollertia mentis parerent nominis claritatem, habitos esse plebejos, indoctos, seminudos: adeo divites facultatibus suis

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lui, et en cela il est épicurien, la vérité est dans une sage réserve, un doute raisonnable (?). S. 88: Nous comprenons maintenant pourquoi Cécilius tient au doute et le prêche. Il y va de sa tranquillité et après tout, ce qui lui importe le plus, ce n'est pas que la vérité soit ceci ou cela, mais qu'il jouisse lui-même en paix de l'existence et de ses douceurs. Il est vraiment épicurien. — Gerade der Epikuräer Vellejus kommt am wenigsten in Betracht. Cäcilius ist trotz seiner Neigung zu epikureischer Physik 5, 7 f. vielmehr Gegenstück des ciceronianischen Cotta, jenes Skeptikers uud römischen Oberpriesters, gleich diesem ein Repräsentant des in sich zerfallenden Heidenthums mit innerer Skepsis hinter dem Aushängeschild der Tradition (c. 5, c. 6, vgl. de n. D. I. 5, 12. III. 2, 5). Dass dieser Skeptiker aber speziell als Anhänger der mittleren Akademie auftritt, beweist eben das eigenthümlich stoische Interesse des Apologeten.

inligatos magis aurum suspicere consuesse quam caelum, nostrates, pauperes et commentos esse prudentiam et tradidisse ceteris disciplinam. Die Pflicht und die Methode aber, beide eng verbunden, bringt er am Anfang des nächsten Capitels 17, 1: Nec recuso, quod C. adserere inter praecipua conisus est, hominem nosse se et circumspicere debere, quid sit, unde sit, quare sit etc. (2) quod ipsum explorare et eruere sine universitatis inquisitione non possumus, cum ita cohaerentia, conexa, concatenata sint, ut nisi divinitatis rationem diligenter excusseris, nescias humanitatis, nec possis pulchre gerere rem civilem, nisi cognoveris hanc communem omnium mundi civitatem, praecipue cum a feris beluis hoc differamus, quod illa prona in terramque vergentia nihil nata sunt prospicere nisi pabulum. Nos quibus vultus erectus, quibus suspectus in caelum datus est, sermo et ratio, per quae Deum adgnoscimus, sentimus, imitamur, ignorare nec fas nec licet ingerentem sese oculis et sensibus nostris caelestem claritatem: (3) sacrilegii enim vel maximi instar humi quaerere quod in sublimi debeas invenire.

Wir sehen, wie tief hinein der Christ dem Philosophen auf spezifisch philosophisches Gebiet folgt und sogar zu der Frage nach den Grundlagen menschlichen Denkens Stellung nimmt. Hier nun trifft das ein, was wir von Anfang an vermuthet hatten: Minucius schlägt sich der Skepsis des Cäcilius gegenüber auf die Seite der Stoiker. Gleich von vornherein macht er den stoischen Sensualismus, ja das ganze stoische Erkenntnissprinzip: sensus et ratio, sinnliche Wahrnehmung und daraus schliessende Vernunft*) geltend, dem schon früher die Häupter der mittleren Akademie, Arcesilaus und Carneades, ihre ἀκαταληψία entgegen gehalten hatten**). Nach echt stoischem Dogmatismus hat Minucius dieses am Anfang als Substrat für alle weitere Entwicklung einfach ponirt (sciat), ohne die ἀκαταληψία des Cäcilius (5, 2) auch nur mit einem einzigen Worte zu entkräften oder sein Prinzip selbst erst als sicher erwiesen zu haben.

Mit diesem stoischen Erkenntnissprinzip harmonirt auch die folgende insita natura sapientia. Sind sinnliche Wahrnehmung und Denkvermögen die Organe zur Aufnahme der Wahrheit, so ist insita sapientia die durch jene eindringende Wahrheit, welche hier

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*) Zeller: Philos. der Griechen. 3. Aufl. 1881. III. 1. S. 76.

**) Cic. de orat. III. 18, 67. de n. D. I. 2, 4. Zeller III. 1. S. 492.

ihrer **Möglichkeit nach** als allen Menschen eingepflanzt gedacht wird. Man erkennt darin die stoischen *προλήψεις* oder *κοιναὶ ἔννοιαι*, Vorstellungen, die, weit entfernt, für angeboren gehalten zu werden, dennoch durch die **sinnlichen Erfahrungen** und daraus gemachte **Schlüsse** zum Theil von selbst (*ἀνεπιτεχνήτως*) im menschlichen Geiste entstehen und darinnen verbleiben als ein oft ungemerkter Wahrheitsfond. Selbst die höchsten Ideen, die des Guten und der Gottheit fanden auf diese Weise zum Menschen ihren Eingang*). Ein solcher Wahrheitsfond ist obige insita sapientia. Sie kann vermöge der Natur unseres Denkens von Allen gleichmässig aus der Erfahrung abgeleitet werden und ist sonach potentiell mit jener natürlichen Denkanlage zugleich gegeben.

Die aus letzterer dem Menschen erwachsende **Pflicht**, Gott zu erkennen, ist gleichfalls echt stoisch. Sie führt uns auf den Grundgedanken stoischer Ethik: *ὁμολογουμένως τῇ φύσει ζῆν*. Auch in ihrer speziellen Gestalt, auf Grund der vultus erectus, suspectus in caelum, sermo et ratio den Himmel denkend zu betrachten und so Gott nachzuahmen, erweist sie sich als stoisch. Ist ja nach stoischer Ansicht dies alles vom göttlichen Geiste bewusst geschaffen, für den menschlichen Gebrauch bestimmt, deren Nichtbenutzung demnach — wie auch Minucius sagt — Pflichtverletzung. Wie genau hierin unser Apologet mit dem Stoicismus zusammenstimmt, zeigen die Worte des Balbus de n. D. II. 56, 140: qui (dii) homines humo excitatos celsos et erectos constituerunt, **ut** deorum cognitionem caelum intuentes capere possent. Sunt enim e terra homines, non ut incolae atque habitatores, sed quasi spectatores superarum rerum atque caelestium, quarum spectaculum ad nullum aliud genus animantium pertinet. Ueber die Nachahmung Gottes, übrigens ein ursprünglich platonischer Gedanke**), äussert er sich II. 14, 37: Ipse autem homo ortus est ad mundum contemplandum et imitandum, wo stoisch-pantheistisch die Welt Gott gleichgesetzt ist, vgl. II. 17, 47.

Aus dieser Hauptaufgabe des Menschen erklärt es sich, dass Minucius die Forderung der Selbsterkenntniss nicht wie Caecilius inter praecipua adserit, sondern jener nachstellt. Noch immer soll der Mensch Object der Forschung bleiben, aber nicht das erste, sondern deren letztes Ziel, welchem die Erkenntniss des Alls und

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*) Zeller III. 1. S. 75. Ueberweg I. S. 234.

**) Tim. 47, C. 39 E.

der Gottheit voranzugehen hat*). Dass diese aber vorangehen muss, d. h. die ganze deductive Methode der Selbsterkenntniss erklärt sich abermals aus stoischer Anschauung. Das Weltall erscheint den Stoikern als ein strenggeordneter Organismus, ein ornatus (κόσμος), eine communis omnium mundi civitas Cic. de n. D. II. 6, 17 vgl. Oct. 17, 2 ff. Wie nun im classischen Staate die Stellung des Einzelnen sich wesentlich bestimmte nach seiner Stellung zum Staate, so wird auch der Mensch seinem Wesen nach nicht anders erkannt, als aus dem Weltzusammenhang heraus, worin er als nothwendiges Glied eingefügt steht (vgl. Cic. II. 14, 37). Man sieht, die altclassische, speziell römische Staatsanschauung ist bei den Stoikern wie bei Minucius übertragen auf das Weltall. Wird dort der Mensch lediglich zum Staatsbürger, so hier zum Weltbürger. Der altclassische Particularismus erweitert sich zum Kosmopolitismus.

Von dieser Auffassung der Welt als eines Organismus gelangt Minucius mit den Stoikern zu jener teleologischen Argumention für das Dasein der Gottheit, welche die Stoiker besonders von Sokrates adoptirten und welche den direkten Gegensatz zur skeptischen Zufallslehre bildet**). Auch hier tritt sie letzterer entgegen, in ihrer Einzelausführung sogar wörtlich dem ciceronianischen Balbus folgend 17, 4. 18, 4 vgl. de n. D. II. Ihr Resultat ist darum auch von dem jenes Stoikers nicht verschieden: esse aliquod numen praestantissimae mentis, quo omnis natura inspiretur, moveatur, alatur, gubernetur vgl. Cic. de n. D. II. 2, 4: esse aliquod numen praestantissimae mentis, quo haec regantur. Dieses Resultat seiner Himmelsbetrachtung lässt ihn dann auch streng methodisch jene letzte Frage (17,1) nach dem Wesen des Menschen beantworten (18, 2)***). Der Mensch ist nicht eine zufällige Composition von Elementen (elementis concretus), oder ein blosses Aggregat

*) Aus der Zusammenstellung von universitas und divinitas ersieht man übrigens, wie hier der stoische Pantheismus noch nachwirkt.

**) Auch deshalb von genannten Akademikern, besonders Carneades angegriffen wurde, vgl. Cic. de n. D. I, 2, 4. II, 65. 163. — Die Aeusserlichkeit, womit die Stoiker mit Sokrates diese Zweckbeziehung aller Dinge fassten und wonach alles in der Welt nur des Menschen wegen da sei, fehlt auch bei Minucius nicht. Es sprechen das ausser dem von Cicero entlehnten Gedanken 17, 6: ut sit nobis operis et quietis alterna reparatio folgende Stellen aus: 36, 5. 32, 2. 34, 11. 38, 1.

***) Diese streng durchgeführte Ordnung durch die universitas hindurch bis zum Menschen genau der Ankündigung gemäss 17, 2 macht uns aufstützig gegen

von Atomen (concinnatis atomis), sondern in der That, wie oben erwartet war (potius), a Deo factus, formatus, animatus vgl. 17, 1.*). Durch diese ästhetische Weltauffassung kommt aber zugleich ein ästhetisches Moment in den Gottesbegriff hinein. Gott ist nicht nur Urheber und formae nostrae pulchritudinis 17, 11, der Schönheit der Welt, sondern er selbst ist schön 18, 4: ita in hac mundi domo cum coelum terramque perspicias... crede esse universitatis dominum parentemque ipsis sideribus et totius mundi partibus pulchriorem. Auch dies ist ganz stoisch-platonisch, vgl. Cic. de n. D. II. 7, 18. Symp. 201 C. Tim. 30 A. u. C.

Während jedoch bisher auf's Strengste die Einheit der Welt betont wurde, so zwar, dass selbst die Gottheit stoisch-pantheistisch mit in die Welt hereingezogen ward**), so wird im Weiteren der Monismus in einen Dualismus gespalten, die communis omnium mundi civitas wird zu einem caeleste regnum (18, 5), dem die imperia terrena gegenüber stehen. Es handelt sich um

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die Echtheit des Abschnittes 18, 3. Er stört den schönen Fortschritt, passt weder zum Vorausgehenden noch bereitet das Folgende vor. Zwar liesse sich der Satz nec — consulit noch halten, aber nicht als Uebergangsphrase, sondern als Recapitulation für die Einzelfürsorge, die ja schon besprochen ist, an die hierauf der folgende Vergleich vom wohlgeordneten Hause als Endrecapitulation über die Providenz überhaupt sich um so besser anschliessen würde.

*) Die Uebersetzung Dombarts (S. 43) „ein Product der Verdichtung der Elemente" vgl. auch c. 5, 8 scheint uns, wenn auch sprachlich richtig, so doch sachlich nicht ganz passend. Die „Verdichtung" kommt nach dem Sinn unserer Stelle und auch c. 5 gar nicht in Betracht; es genügt überall die eigentliche Bedeutung „Verschmelzung," „Verbindung," wie solche 26, 12 sogar gefordert wird. Und zwar ist es die durch Zufall zu Stande gekommene Verbindung von Elementen, die fortuitae concursiones 5, 7, die elementorum ut voluntaria concretio 5. 8, es ist die ganze mechanische Naturerklärung ohne ordnenden νοῦς (vgl. natura in se coeunte und quis deus auctor 5, 7) nach Art des Empedocles, des Democrit, der Epicureer mitsammt dem Akademiker Cäcilius, gegen welche Minucius sich wendet und welcher er sein bewusst schaffendes und ordnendes Lebensprinzip, seinen weltbildenden Gott gegenüberstellt. Auch hier wieder ganz nach seinem Vorbilde Balbus, der gleichfalls gegen die Entstehung der Welt durch eine fortuita concursio und durch einen concursus atomorum polemisirt de n. D. II. 37, 93 f.

**) So durch schon erwähnte Zusammenstellung von universitas und divinitas, dann durch jenen Vergleich der Welt mit einem Hause, dem Gott innewohnend gedacht wird, wodurch auch das quo omnis natura inspiretur, moveatur, alatur 17, 4, den Sinn einer inneren Durchdringung der Natur durch das göttliche Wesen erhält, vgl. auch Cic. de n. D. II. 35, 90.

das erste Argument für die Einheit Gottes. Minucius meint 18, 5: quod ipsum non multi laboris aperire cogitanti terrena imperia, quibus exempla utique de coelo. Quando umquam regni societas aut cum fide coepit aut sine cruore desiit? Diesem folgen dann geschichtliche Beispiele, die gegen die Mehrherrschaft sprechen. Dass hier platonische Anschauung mit unterläuft, beweisen die plötzlich auftauchenden Urbilder exempla *παραδείγματα*. Es ist diese ganze Stelle ein eigenthümliches Stück minucianischer Anschauung. Die irdischen Reiche und zwar die für den Denkenden als das Normale sich herausstellenden Monarchieen sind Abbilder der himmlischen Urbilder, resp. des göttlichen Urbildes. Man kann sich dies nicht anders denken, als dass Gott, der nach 25, 12 (deo dispensante) auch in der Geschichte waltet, „ihm zum Bilde" die Monarchie der Entwickelung der Völker als das Naturgemässe zu Grunde gelegt habe, dass dieses von den Denkenden als das Normale aus der Geschichte erkannt werde und nun seinerseits einen Beweis abgebe für die göttliche Monarchie im Himmel*). So wird die geschichtliche Erscheinung der Alleinherrschaft der Ausdruck eines der Geschichte zu Grunde liegenden Gesetzes und hat somit nicht nur den Werth einer blossen Analogie, sondern durchaus den eines Beweises, um so mehr, da sie besonders dem Denkenden (cogitanti) an's Herz gelegt wird. Sie ist aber sonach auch auf folgenden Gedanken, eine reine Analogie aus der Natur, von Einfluss. Dadurch, dass auch unter den Gesellschaftsformen der Thiere die Monarchie sich geltend macht, stellt sich von selbst der Gedanke ein, dass die Alleinherrschaft von Minucius als ein im ganzen Weltall verbreitetes Gesetz angenommen worden ist. Dies aber führt uns auf das stoische *ἡγεμονικόν*, das zunächst als der beherrschende Theil der Seele (die Vernunft), dann in jedem zusammengesetzten Wesen befindlich gedacht wurde (Cic. de n. D. II. 11, 29), von Minucius jedoch auf jeden Gesellschaftskörper überhaupt, in einem einzelnen Naturgebiete wie im Weltganzen, angewendet worden ist. Aehnlich äussert sich Balbus II. 11, 29:

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*) Allerdings eine petitio principii. — Er berührt sich hierin eigenthümlich mit Plutarch, der auch die Monarchie, angeblich nach Plato, die wünschenswertheste Verfassung und den Herrscher das Bild und den Diener der Gottheit nennt (Zeller III, 2. S. 189). Sollte Minucius dessen „*περὶ μοναρχίας*" gekannt haben?

omnem naturam necesse est, quae non solitaria sit neque simplex, sed cum alia juncta atque connexa, habere aliquem in se principatum, ut in homine mentem, in bellua quiddam simile mentis, desgleichen in den Wurzeln der Pflanzen und so auch in der ganzen Natur: omnium verum potestate dominatuque dignissimum. Vgl. Zeller III. 1. S. 148. Indem nun Minucius sich Gott als das ἡγεμονικόν der Welt dachte, das nach seinem Plane alle anderen Gemeinwesen gleichfalls mit solchen ἡγεμονικά ausstattete, so mochten sich ihm die platonischen παραδείγματα sowie der Gegensatz von Himmel und Erde nahegelegt haben*). Wir haben sonach in dieser spezifisch minucianischen Stelle eine Vermischung stoischer und platonischer Anschauung.

Mehr noch tritt jener Dualismus hervor in dem dritten Argument für die Einheit Gottes: aus dem gewonnenen Begriff des Schöpfers (parens)**). Indem darin der Werkmeister seinem Werke gegenübergestellt wird, erweitert sich der Gegensatz von Himmel und Erde zu dem von Gott und Welt und wird Gott selbst in die reine Transcendenz hinausgerückt, 18, 7: tu in caelo summam majestatem dividi credas et scindi veri illius ac divini imperii totam potestatem, cum palam sit parentem omnium Deum nec principium habere nec terminum, qui nativitatem omnibus praestet, sibi perpetuitatem, qui ante mundum fuerit sibi ipse pro mundo. Man könnte nun hier, wie auch bei den folgenden Wesenseigenschaften Gottes, auf christlichen Einfluss schliessen. Indess man würde damit zu weit gehen, so nahe er auch zu liegen scheint. Denn die Transcendenz, die Ewigkeit und Unveränderlichkeit, sowie die daraufgenannten Eigenschaften der Unsichtbarkeit (visu clarior), Uebersinnlichkeit (sensibus·maior), Immaterialität (tactu purior), Unermesslichkeit (infinitus, immensus), Unbegreiflichkeit und Unaussprechlichkeit ergeben sich einestheils bei dem einmal angenommenen Schöpferbegriff aus Abstraction, zu der ja die Stelle selbst indirekt auffordert, andrerseits aber

*) Den Sitz der weltbeherrschenden Macht dachten sich übrigens die meisten Stoiker im Himmel vgl. Zeller III, 1. S. 137.

**) Eigentlich ist dieses so wenig ein Argument wie die vorausgehende Analogie aus der Natur, sondern eher eine Appellation an die Vernunft, aus dieser letzten Schöpfungsursache weiter zu schliessen und zwar, wie hier angegeben wird, zunächst auf ihre Anfang- und Endlosigkeit, ihre dem Werden (nativitas) gegenübergestellte perpetuitas, Ewigkeit und zugleich Unveränderlichkeit, sowie zuletzt auf ihre Einheit. Anders lässt sich die entschieden corrumpirte Stelle nicht wohl erklären. (S. Dombart S. 48 u. 131. Anhang.)

finden sie sich schon längst unter den Philosophen, vor allem unter den Platonikern. So schon bei Plato selbst die Transcendenz vgl. Resp. VI. 507 B. f., die Unveränderlichkeit Resp. II. 380 D. f. und die von den ersten Christen so oft angeführte Unaussprechlichkeit Gottes Tim. 28 C.*). Unter den Zeitgenossen aber finden sich obige Eigenschaften bei Platonikern wie Maximus von Tyrus vgl. Zeller III, 2, S. 207, Apulejus e. d. S. 211, Albinus S. 213 und sogar Celsus S. 215, Anm. 2, dem vermeintlichen Gegner des Minucius. Es ist demnach hier weit eher der heidnisch-philosophische, insbesondere eher der platonische als der christliche Einfluss anzunehmen**).

Herrscht hier aber platonischer, so im Folgenden wiederum der stoische Einfluss vor, in dem letzten Argument für die Einheit Gottes, de consensu omnium 18, 11: quid quod omnium de isto habeo consensum? audio vulgus... audio poëtas (19, 1).. et philosophos (19, 3). Nach obigen Voraussetzungen ist dies für Minucius ein nicht unwichtiges Argument. Es ist nichts Anderes als ein Zurückgehen auf erwähnten Fond gemeinsamer Wahrheiten, jene insita sapientia aller Menschen, darinnen sich namentlich die Idee von dem einen Gotte vorfindet. Sie konnte ja und musste sich sogar einem Jeden aus der Erfahrung aufdrängen***), vornehmlich aus der sinnenden Betrachtung des Himmels und seiner geordneten Schönheit, dann der Erde und ihrer mannichfachen Wesen, deren einzelne Gesellschaftsformen mit ihren ἡγεμονικά in sich nothwendig auf ein Urhegemonikon, den einen und wahren Gott, hinwiesen. Dass nun denselben die erfinderische Vernunft des Menschen (ingenium 16, 5) in der That in sich aufgenommen, dem Einzelnen weniger oder mehr bewusst, das beweisen die Stimmen aus dem Volke, die Dichter und die Philosophen, das beweisen in erster Linie die Christen. Sie sind es, die den Reichen und Vornehmen gegenüber, welche von ihren Reichthümern geblendet magis aurum suspicere consueverant quam caelum, vielmehr umgekehrt caelum magis quam aurum suspexerunt et prudentiam

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*) Bei den Apologeten und ersten Kirchenvätern oft gebraucht, auch lebendiges Gemeindebewusstsein vgl. Eus. h. eccl. V. 1. § 58 u. 61.

**) Christlich oder wenigstens biblisch erscheint höchstens das verbo jubet, das im Verein mit dem geschichtlich gewendeten qui ante mundum fuerit sibi ipse pro mundo an den Schöpfungsbericht der Genesis erinnern könnte.

***) Vgl. 17, 2: ingerentem sese oculis et sensibus nostris caelestem claritatem.

commenti sunt et tradiderunt ceteris disciplinam d. h. gestützt auf jene Wahrheitsorgane sensus et ratio den Himmel durchforscht und daraus den wahren Gott erkannt haben (16, 5)*). Minucius schliesst den Abschnitt gegen den Akademiker mit einer Recapitulation, in welcher er rückblickend auf den cäcilianischen Hauptvorwurf den Christen eine solche Gleichberechtigung mit den Philosophen zugesteht, dass er sie sogar mit dem Philosophentitel auszeichnet 20, 1: Exposui opiniones omnium ferme philosophorum, quibus inlustrior gloria est, Deum unum multis licet designasse nominibus, ut quivis arbitretur, aut nunc Christianos philosophos esse aut philosophos fuisse jam tunc Christianos.

Unsere Muthmassung ist Wahrheit geworden. Minucius hat sich in Wirklichkeit durch die ganze Anlage zum Stoicismus hinüberdrängen lassen. Nicht nur zeigt er sich in den meisten seiner Anschauungen als Stoiker, sondern macht auch seine Glaubensgenossen dazu. Das Christenthum wird auf dem stoischen Erkenntnissprinzip aufgebaut und der Christengott durch stoische Teleologie gefunden. Dass dies eine fundamentale Verkennung des Christenthums als einer Offenbarung Gottes ist, leuchtet ein. Das Christenthum entspringt nach minucianischer Anschauung durchaus dem Menschengeiste selber wie jedes andere menschliche Geistesprodukt und ist darum auch geschichtlich als prudentia und disciplina aus ihm hervorgegangen (16, 5). Hierin aber steht Minucius in prinzipiellem Gegensatz zu den Haupt-Apologeten seiner Zeit**). Man lese nur bei Athenagoras Aussprüche wie Suppl. 7, 4: *Ποιηταὶ μὲν γὰρ καὶ φιλόσοφοι, ὡς καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις, ἐπέβαλον στοχαστικῶς* (sc. *ἕνα θεὸν εἶναι*), *κινηθέντες μὲν κατὰ συμπάθειαν τῆς παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ πνοῆς ὑπὸ τῆς αὐτὸς αὑτοῦ ψυχῆς ἕκαστος ζητῆσαι, εἰ δυνατὸς εὑρεῖν καὶ νοῆσαι τὴν ἀλήθειαν. τοσοῦτον δὲ δυνηθέντες ὅσον περινοῆσαι οὐχ εὕρηνται, ὡς οὐ παρὰ θεοῦ περὶ θεοῦ ἀξιώσαντες μαθεῖν ἀλλὰ παρ' αὑτοῦ ἕκαστος.*

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*) Caelum ist durchaus in eigentlicher Bedeutung zu fassen, es kommt in der Apologie nicht anders vor (selbst das Adjectiv caelestis 19, 14 kann so gefasst werden). Auch das suspicere, obwohl 16, 5 zugleich auf aurum bezüglich und daher = hochschätzen, behält doch durch den im Folgenden ausgesprochenen Sensualismus und die daran anknüpfende teleologische Betrachtung des Weltalls, ganz besonders aber durch das suspectus in caelum 17, 2 obige eigentliche Bedeutung ehrfurchtsvoller Himmelsbetrachtung.

**) Wir citiren die griechischen Apologeten nach der Ausgabe von Otto.

— (8) ἡμεῖς δὲ ὧν νοοῦμεν καὶ πεπιστεύκαμεν ἔχομεν προφήτας μάρτυρας, οἳ πνεύματι ἐνθέῳ ἐκπεφωνήκασι καὶ περὶ θεοῦ καὶ περὶ τῶν τοῦ θεοῦ. Vgl. dazu 32, 13. 24, 24. Genau so Tatian ad Gr. c. 20, 9. 32, 1 f., wie endlich auch Justin, nach welchem die Christen Schüler des in Christo Mensch gewordenen ganzen Logos sind, I. 13. I. 12, 13. II. 6. II. 8, 5. Wir werden später sehen, wie sich in Minucius selbst der Christ gegen dieses Vernunftprinzip sträubt, ohne jedoch dagegen aufkommen zu können.

B. Dem Vertheidiger des Heidenthums gegenüber.

Von diesem rein philosophischen Standpunkte aus begreift sich nun auch der gesammte zweite Untertheil mit seinem ausschliesslich intellectuellen Interesse, mit seiner scharfen Polemik gegen die Leichtgläubigkeit der Vorfahren, ihren gesammten Götter- und Wunderglauben. Minucius ist sich dabei seiner Gleichstellung mit den Philosophen so bewusst, dass er dem heidnischen Götterglauben gegenüber sich getrost auf die Autorität der Philosophie berufen zu können meint 20, 2: non nos debet antiquitas inperitorum fabellis suis delectata vel capta ad errorem mutui rapere consensus, cum philosophorum suorum sententiis refellatur, quibus et rationis et vetustatis adsistit auctoritas. Bei diesem Zusammengehen mit den Philosophen vergisst er offenbar ganz seinen Christenstand. Im Eifer gegen den unsinnigen Wunderglauben der Heiden lässt er sich zu Sätzen fortreissen, die auch die eigene christliche Ueberlieferung und den Glauben an sie treffen. So 20, 4: quae (miracula) si essent facta, fierent: quia fieri non possunt, ideo nec facta sunt, ein Satz, der durch folgende noch näher illustrirt wird 24, 2: vos timetis, quos facitis, dum unusquisque vestrum non cogitat prius se debere deum nosse quam colere, dum inconsulte gestiunt parentibus oboedire, dum fieri malunt alieni erroris accessio quam sibi credere, dum nihil ex his quae timent norunt. Er folgt hier vielmehr dem Stoiker Balbus nach, der auch gegen die falsae opiniones erroresque et aniles superstitiones der Vorfahren zu Felde zieht vgl. de n. D. II. 28, 70*). Mit diesem theilt Minucius

*) Selbstverständlich geht er über ihn noch hinaus, wie in der Beurtheilung heidnischer Orakel und Weissagungen c. 26. Gleichwohl zeigen sich auch hier noch Spuren seines Glaubens an ihre Gültigkeit c. 27, 1: falsis pluribus involuta vgl. 26, 7.

auch die Abneigung gegen Homer sowie den bekannten Euhemerismus, über den drei Capitel mehr oder weniger direkt handeln (c. 21—23). Auch sonst finden sich Aeusserungen, die den oben geltend gemachten stoischen Anschauungen entsprechen. Wenn er z. B. 23, 1 sagt, die Dichter haben veritati ipsi geschadet und bald darauf 23, 8, die Heiden seien in ihrem Irrthume alt geworden, obgleich veritas sit obvia, sed requirentibus, so ist zwar unter der Wahrheit zunächst negativ die Erkenntniss von der Nichtigkeit heidnischer Götterverehrung zu verstehen. Indess verglichen mit dem Vorangegangenen, der insita sapientia und dem natürlichen Gottesbewusstsein, das instinctiv selbst unter dem ungebildeten Volke lebendig ist, gewinnt jene veritas einen positiven Inhalt. Sie ist das im All verbreitete Gesetz des *ἡγεμονικόν* und die daraus gewonnene, auch den Heiden innewohnende *ἔννοια κοινή* des einen Gottes. So allein begreift sich jene reale „veritas obvia," „veritas ipsa." Gesagtes stimmt auch ganz und gar mit dem Folgenden überein 24, 2. Hier wird in Gestalt eines Grundsatzes gegenüber dem alienus error das sibi credere geltend gemacht. Im Menschen also liegt die Wahrheit! Diese aber ist nichts anderes als eben jene sapientia insita, obige *ἔννοια κοινή* von dem einen Gotte, welche ermöglicht wird durch die gegebenen natürlichen Aufnahmeorgane für die Wahrheit, durch sensus et ratio. Auf diese Naturanlage drängt unser Apologet immer und immer wieder *zurück*. So schon im ersten Satze dieses Capitels 24, 1: Quanto verius de diis vestris animalia muta naturaliter judicant, wo er den vernunftbegabten Menschen sogar das natürliche Urtheil der Thiere entgegenhält. Dann aber in dem stark an Senecas de supertitione*) anklingenden Gedanken (4): aut cui testa sunt obscena demessa, quo modo deum non violat qui hoc modo placat, cum si eunuchos deus vellet, posset procreare, non facere? Diese Naturanlage umzuändern hiesse an Gottes Willen ändern, in Gottes Machtgebiet frevlerisch eingreifen, ist daher ebenso ein sacrilegium, wie oben (17, 3) die Vernachlässigung der von Gott gegebenen und zum Gebrauch bestimmten Vernunftanlage. Auch hier also treffen wir auf jene Hochachtung vor dem natürlich Gegebenen und die daraus hervorgehende Forderung eines naturgemässen Lebenswandels, das Grundprinzip stoischer Moral.

Eine abermalige Vermischung stoischer und platonischer Gedanken bietet die nun folgende Dämonologie (26, 7—27, 8). Den

*) Bei Aug. de civ. Dei 6, 10.

Schlüssel zum Verständniss dafür, ja wir möchten sagen, der ganzen minucianischen Grundanschauung, giebt uns unseres Erachtens c. 26, 12 die minucianisch-stoische Interpretation jener platonischen, zu damaliger Zeit viel benutzten Stelle Symp. 202 E*). Wir bemerkten schon, Minucius wollte hier für die im nächsten Capitel zu besprechende dämonische Einwirkung auf die Menschen eine physiologische Erklärung geben und so zu jener selbst hinüberleiten. Dabei aber ist ihm wohl unwillkürlich seine eigne, dem Plato fremde Anschauungsweise mit untergelaufen. Sie verräth sich gleich in den ersten Worten. Das einfache platonische *πᾶν τὸ δαιμόνιον μεταξύ ἐστι θεοῦ τε καὶ θνητοῦ* giebt er wieder mit: vult enim esse substantiam inter mortalem inmortalemque (sc. substantiam), fügt dazu als Erklärung id est, inter corpus et spiritum mediam und erweitert dies in einer zweiten Erklärung terreni ponderis et caelestis levitatis admixtione concretam, nimmt also einerseits mortalis substantia, corpus, terrenum pondus zusammen und bringt sie in Gegensatz zu den gleichfalls identifizirten Begriffen inmortalis substantia, spiritus, caelestis levitas. Das ist ein interessanter Einblick in seine eigene philosophische, allem Anschein nach dualistische Grundanschauung. Allein, der Dualismus darin ist kein prinzipieller. Während nämlich inmortalis und mortalis subst., spiritus und corpus, caelum und terra allerdings direkte Gegensätze sind, so doch nicht pondus und levitas, die letzten und charakterischsten Begriffe in jener Interpretation. Denn levitas ist logisch nicht „Gewichtlosigkeit, nicht ein contrarium, sondern ein minus zu pondus, schliesst demnach noch immer ein Theil Schwere in sich, eine Eigenschaft, die nur dem Gebiete des Stofflichen angehört. Damit aber ergiebt sich auch für die caelestis levitas wie gleichfalls für spiritus und inmortalis subst. die Grundeigenschaft des Materiellen und demnach auch kein absoluter Gegensatz genannter drei Glieder zu terrenum pondus, corpus und mortalis subst., sondern nur ein relativer, sofern ihnen allen eine materielle Substanz zu Grunde liegt, die hier nur nach grösserem und kleinerem Gewicht oder, physisch erklärt, nach grösserer und geringerer Verdichtung der Urmaterie geschieden wird**). Das aber ist ohne Frage stoische

*) Vgl. Zeller III, 2. S. 211. Anm. 4.

**) Dies ist allerdings ein Widerspruch zu der 18, 7 f. ausgesprochenen Ueberweltlichkeit Gottes. Aber dieser Widerspruch ist nicht zu lösen. Es gehen

Physik. Hier treten auch die feineren Stoffe den gröberen gegenüber und sind massgebend für die Stellung des Weltganzen. Die schwere Erde nebst dem Wasser liegt tiefer als die leichte Luft mit dem Feuer. Diese bilden von unten nach oben resp. von innen nach aussen die 4 Schichten im Weltall: Erde, Wasser, Luft und Feuer. Das Feuer des Umkreises hiess der Aether, dessen äussersten Theil Zeno den Himmel nannte vgl. Zeller III. 1, S. 184 f. Dass diese ätherische Leichtigkeit bei Minucius mit der unsterblichen, also göttlichen Substanz, andrerseits mit dem menschlichen Geist als gleichfalls göttlichen Wesens, identifizirt wird, ist ebenso echt stoisch, vgl. Zeller III. 1. 137 (2). 138. 200. — Der Gegensatz in der Interpretation ist also nicht fundamentaler Art Der Dualismus ruht im Grunde auf stoischem Monismus. Ja wir können stoischen Einfluss selbst in diesem vermeintlichen Dualismus noch wahrnehmen. Bringen wir nämlich zur weiteren Erklärung den caelestis vigor von 26, 7 hinzu, so bestimmt sich der Gegensatz zum terrenum pondus als kraftvolle zur ohnmächtigen, als aktive zur passiven Substanz. Dies aber führt uns zu den zwei stoischen Grundprinzipien alles Daseins, welche die Stoiker innerhalb des Körperlichen selbst wieder unterschieden, dem *ποιοῦν* und dem *πάσχον*, vgl. Zeller III. 1. S. 131. Ueberweg I. S. 235 f. Die Kraft oder das Göttliche ist nach stoischer Anschauung nur der feinere Stoff gegenüber dem spezifisch Stofflichen. Beide, Kraft und Stoff, sind in der minucianischen Anschauung vertheilt auf die Gebiete des Himmels und der Erde. Dort ist, wie ja auch Zeno, Chrysippus und die Mehrzahl der Stoiker annahmen,

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hier eben die zwei Anschauungen, die stoische und platonische, unvermittelt neben einander. Spricht Minucius von Gott allein, so hebt er ihn platonisch über Erde 18, 5, Welt und Endlichkeit 18, 7 f. hinaus. Kommt er aber auf Gottes Einwirkung auf die Welt, seine Allgegenwart, Providenz zu sprechen, so geschieht dies nach stoisch-materialistischer Denkweise. Gott ist ihm da nobis infusus, ferner omnia caelestia terrenaque et quae extra istam orbis provinciam sunt, sind Deo plena 32, 8; non solum in oculis eius, sed in sinu vivimus 33, 1; Gott ist die mens, qua omnis natura inspiratur, movetur, alitur (also von innen heraus), vgl. dazu die volle Uebereinstimmung mit der stoischen Ansicht Vergils 19, 1, nach der diese Welt spiritus intus alit et infusa mens agitat (bei Seneca cons. ad Helv. 8, 3: diffusus). Auch hier in seiner Interpretation ist die stoische Anschauung durchgekommen. Sie erweist sich, weil seiner eigenen Erklärung entstammend, als specifisch minucianisches Eigenthum, wie auch der platonischen Denkweise gegenüber als die ursprünglichere.

der Sitz der göttlichen, weltbeherrschenden Kraft, auf der Erde der Sitz träger Schwere, der Sitz der Ohnmacht*).

Diese Unterscheidung aber führt uns hinüber zu einem wirklichen platonischen Dualismus, der an anderer Stelle der minucianischen Dämonologie doch nicht fehlt. Am Anfang derselben 26, 7 f. erfahren wir, wodurch die Dämonen zu ihrer Doppelnatur gelangt sind, nämlich terrenis labibus et cupiditatibus. Das nun ist ganz platonisch. Diese terrenae labes im Gegensatz zu dem Göttlichen bilden den eigentlichen platonischen Dualismus von Gott und Sinnlichkeit. Die Körperlichkeit — hier zur Irdischkeit erweitert — ist nach Plato der Sitz der Begierden, welche die Seele beflecken und von dem guten und vernünftigen Gott abziehen, Phäd. 81 B. 80 D. Das oberste Ziel platonischer Ethik ist daher die Flucht aus der umgebenden Sinnenwelt, die Ablösung der

*) Zeller III. 1. S. 137 u. 152 f. Uebrigens spricht auch der Stoiker Balbus von der Erde als der crassissima regio mundi von dem crassissimus aer umgeben de n. D. II. 6, 17. Ueber den caelestis vigor 26, 7 vgl. man die auf obige (19, 1) citirte Stelle aus Vergil folgenden Verse Aen. 6, 730: „Igneus est ollis vigor et caelestis origo seminibus etc. und 745 f.:

Donec longa dies perfecto tempore orbe
Concretam exemit labem purumque relinquit
Aetherium sensum atque aurai simplicis ignem.

Diese philosophische Auseinandersetzung des Anchises, aus der auch genanntes Citat stammt 19, 1, bildet inhaltlich wie sprachlich betrachtet den reinen Commentar zur minucianischen Anschauung. Da haben wir den göttlichen spiritus, die infusa mens, die sich magno se corpore miscet, also die Scheidung von Geist und Körper in universalem Sinne. Da haben wir den vigor, der mit dem Attribut igneus und seinem Nachbarbegriff caelestis origo sich seinem Wesen nach als feurig, und seinem Wohnsitze nach als himmlisch herausstellt. Dazu kommt endlich als fernere Erklärung purus aetherius sensus und ignis simplicis aurai (sc. caeli, des höchsten Theiles der Atmosphäre vgl. v. 733. X. 898). Hierdurch erklärt sich auch die simplicitas substantiae suae 26, 8 als die ätherisch-feurige, von der Ursubstanz wohl nicht verschieden gedachte Wesenheit der Dämonen, die dieselbe durch ihr bewiesenes Wohlgefallen an irdischem Sinnengenuss — und nun kommt die platonische Anschauung herein — befleckt, beschwert haben, dadurch zur Erde herabgesunken und dann — auf welche Weise, sagt Minucius nicht — zu jenen räthselhaften Mittelwesen geworden sind inter substantiam mortalem inmortalemque, id est inter corpus et spiritum medii, terreni ponderis et caelestis levitatis admixtione concreti. Der Unterschied zwischen der Anschauung des Minucius und des Vergil ist nur der, dass die Seelen in der Unterwelt das einst wieder erlangen werden (simplicitas subst.), was die Dämonen in der Vorzeit verloren haben. Sonst sind die Anschauungen ganz gleich. Es sind wesentlich stoische vgl. Cic. de n. D. II. 24. 64. 15, 39 und 41. 11, 30 f.

Seele vom Körper, wie sie besonders im Phädo empfohlen wird (vgl. auch Theät. 176 A. Rep. VII. 514 f.). Auch der Gedanke von dem Belasten der Seele durch die körperliche Gemeinschaft, selbst die Fassung des Körperlichen als eines Irdischen, Erdartigen findet sich dort ausgesprochen, Phäd. 81 C: *ἐμβριθὲς δέ γε τοῦτο οἴεσθαι χρὴ εἶναι καὶ βαρὺ καὶ γεῶδες καὶ ὁρατόν. ὃ δὴ καὶ ἔχουσα ἡ τοιαύτη ψυχὴ βαρύνεταί τε καὶ ἕλκεται πάλιν εἰς τὸν ὁρατὸν τόπον* etc.*) Aehnlich hier: spiritus sunt insinceri, vagi, a caelesti vigore terrenis labibus et cupiditatibus degravati. isti.. posteaquam simplicitatem substantiae suae onusti et inmersi vitiis perdiderunt... non desinunt alienati a Deo... a Deo segregare 26, 8.

So vereinigt jetzt die terra zwei Begriffe in sich, den physischen der Ohnmacht (Schwere) und den mehr ethischen**) der Sinnlichkeit. Mit beiden versehen tritt sie in Gegensatz zu Gott (Geist) und Himmel und bildet mit diesem einen Dualismus, der nur nach der einen Hälfte (der ethischen Seite) ein platonischer genannt werden kann, nach der anderen aber (der physischen) nur die mehr stoische Unterscheidung der einen materiellen Ursubstanz ist nach Schwere und Leichtigkeit, nach Ohnmacht und Kraft.

Es gehen hier also platonische und stoische***) Elemente eng nebeneinander, treffen aber zusammen in dem einen Begriff der terra mit seiner doppelten, theils physischen theils ethischen Grund-

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*) Auch dieser Platonismus findet sich bei Vergil, vgl. VI, 731 f.: noxia corpora, terreni artus, moribunda membra ... 734: clausae tenebris et carcere caeco (sc. corpore) ... 737: corporeae pestes und die mit der Seele verwachsene (concreta) labes, von der sie gereinigt werden soll und wird, vgl. 745 f. — Bei dieser Uebereinstimmung mit Vergil verstehen wir nun auch die fast enthusiastische Zustimmung des Minucius 19, 1: quid Mantuanus Maro? nonne apertius, proximius, verius ... ait etc., wie auch den auffälligen Umstand, dass er den Mantuaner von allen Dichtern allein und zwar namentlich citirt.

**) Freilich nicht rein ethisch, sondern ethisch-intellectuell, vgl. Ausdrücke wie error pravitatis 26, 8 und 27, 2: nam falluntur et fallunt. Genau wie Plato Phäd. 81 A: *πλάνης καὶ ἀνοίας καὶ . . ἀγρίων ἐρώτων καὶ τῶν ἄλλων κακῶν τῶν ἀνθρωπείων ἀπηλλαγμένη* etc., weshalb auch die reine Seele zum *ἀγαθὸς καὶ φρόνιμος θεός* gelangt 80 D. Dadurch deutet auch hier der Gegensatz der terra nur auf einen guten und vernünftigen, nicht im christlichen Sinne auf einen wesentlich heiligen Gott.

***) Noch einmal auf dämonologischem Gebiete kommt die stoische Anschauung zum Vorschein in der Auffassung des menschlichen Genius' als eines Dämons 29, 5.

bedeutung. Wir werden diesen Begriff nach seiner einen Seite auf eigentlich christlichem Gebiete wieder antreffen.

Die Dämonologie, so sahen wir, schliesst den zweiten Untertheil ab und leitet zum dritten, dem spezifisch christlichen über, c. 28—38. Es lässt sich erwarten, dass wir in diesem die eigenthümlich christlichen Lehren und Begriffe vorfinden werden, welche wir bisher noch ganz vermissten, und dass es sich zeigen wird, wie und ob Minucius dieselben verstanden hat.

C. Dem Ankläger des Christenthums gegenüber.

Auch hier, um mit Allgemeinem zu beginnen, wird noch immer der intellectuelle*) Standpunkt eingehalten, besonders gegenüber den plumpen, sicher dem Volke entstammenden Anschuldigungen: quasi Christiani monstra colerent, infantes vorarent, convivia incesta miscerent 28, 2. Minucius fertigt sie mit Wendungen wie quis tam stultus ... quis stultior, ut hoc credat 28, 7 kurz ab, um darauf nach Art der Apologeten den Heiden ihre Vorwürfe, aber ungleich feiner, sogar mit schlagendem Witz 28, 7 f. (totos asinos) zurückzugeben. Hierzu aber kommt grade in diesem Untertheile die ethische Beurtheilung, die ebenso in sittlicher Entrüstung über das verwahrloste heidnische Leben und Treiben, wie auch in vernichtender, theilweise recht concret redender Kritik desselben sich äussert, vgl. 31, 1. 28, 9—11. 37, 12, andrerseits aber in der Entschiedenheit und Wärme, womit er für den reinen Lebenswandel seiner Glaubensgenossen eintritt (29, 1. 31 und 38).

Und nun im Einzelnen. Bereits kurz vor dem Ende des vorausgehenden Untertheiles konnten wir zwei spezifisch christliche Begriffe in der Darstellung bemerken, die fides und gratia. Beide aber geben uns, so christlich sie klingen, über die christliche Lehre nur wenig Aufschluss. Es heisst nämlich 27, 7 von den Dämonen: adjurati inim per Deum verum et solum**) inviti miseris corporibus inhorrescunt et vel exiliunt statim vel evanescunt gradatim, prout fides patientis adjuvat aut gratia curantis adspirat. Gratia ist

*) Sind doch alle an die Götter d. i. die Dämonen Glaubende inperiti 27, 8 caeci et hebetes 29, 2. Alle Anschuldigungen erwachsen eben auf dem durch vorangegangenen zweiten Untertheil gelegten Grunde heidnischen Irrthums.

**) Interessant ist der Seitenblick auf Justin II. 6, 13. 8, 5, wo dies κατὰ (διὰ) τοῦ ὀνόματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ geschieht.

hiernach nicht die göttliche Gnade, sondern im Besitz eines Menschen, ohne Zweifel die christliche „Gnadengabe," deren ja in den ersten Jahrhunderten nach Christo so verschiedenfache lebendig waren, hier speziell das *χάρισμα ἰάματος* I. Cor. 12, 9 (vgl. Tat. ad Gr. 18, 1). Die fides aber lässt zwei Bedeutungen zu, entweder ist sie der Glaube an die Wunderkraft des Exorcisten (eine Art Sympathie) oder der Glaube an den deus verus et solus. Beides ist nichts speziell Christliches*).

Bei weitem mehr zu denken giebt die nächste hier in Betracht kommende christliche, sogar christologische Stelle 29, 2, die einzige, in welcher Christus selbst erwähnt wird. Hier vor allem sehen wir uns im Gegensatz zu den genannten Beurtheilern des Minucius. Dombart, um nur diesen hier anzuführen, meint (S. VIII Einl.): „Es muss einem jeden Leser auffallen, dass in der Schrift, die doch eine Apologie des Christenthums sein soll, so wenig von Christus und eigentlich christlichen Verhältnissen gesprochen wird. Die neue Lehre stellt sich uns fast durchweg als ein moral-philosophischer Monotheismus dar. Man würde aber irren, wollte man daraus schliessen, Minucius oder gar die damalige Christenheit habe wirklich nur solch' einem abstrakten Monotheismus gehuldigt. Dass er selbst über Christus wesentlich dieselben Vorstellungen hatte, wie die Apostel und wie noch heute die gläubige Christenheit (!), lässt sich unschwer aus einer kurzen Bemerkung c. 29, 2 abnehmen, welche indirekt seine und seiner Genossen (!) Glauben an die göttliche Natur Christi bezeugt." Indem nun Dombart einerseits die Uebereinstimmung des Minucius mit den christologischen Anschauungen der Mitapologeten (Justin, Athen.) ponirt S. VIII, andererntheils auf die Keim'sche Hypothese gestützt, annimmt, dass der Octavius eine Antwort auf Celsus' „wahres Wort" sei, drittens aber die in letzterer Schrift gebrachten Angriffe gegen Christi Person im Octavius nicht widerlegt findet, „zumal da sie theilweise von Caecilius vorgeführt sind"**), so kommt er zu dem Schlusse, dass Minucius über Christus absichtlich geschwiegen, d. h. also, grade das Hauptsächlichste des Christenthums für sich behalten habe. Dombart fügt dazu: „offenbar hielt er den

*) Vgl. 33, 3: nam et Judaei Deum nostrum, idem enim omnium Deus est, experti sunt.

**) Wir müssen hier zur Vermeidung eines Missverständnisses dieses etwas dunkelen Satzes bemerken, dass Min. durchaus alles zurückweist, was Cäcilius gegen die Person Christi vorbringt, vgl. 9, 4.

Angriffen auf die Person Christi gegenüber Zurückhaltung und Schweigen vorläufig für das Zweckmässigste. Ohne bei seinen heidnischen Lesern etwas Anderes vorauszusetzen als Vernunft, Wahrheitsliebe und Kenntniss der heidnischen Litteratur, suchte er vor Allem drei Dinge sicher zu stellen: die Existenz eines Gottes, die Regierung der Welt durch dessen allwaltende Fürsorge und die sittliche Reinheit der christlichen Glaubensgenossenschaft. Die ersten beiden Punkte belegt er durch historische und philosophische Gründe, für deren Würdigung er sein Publikum, die gebildete Heidenwelt, genügend vorbereitet wusste, und von der Wahrheit seines Zeugnisses für den reinen Wandel der Christen konnte sich jeder seiner Leser bei redlichem Willen durch den Augenschein überzeugen.“ (S. X, XI).

Nun, wir läugnen nicht, dass der einzige, so kurze und auch schwerfällige Passus über Christi Person auffallend erscheint, um so mehr, wenn man die ausführlichen christologischen Erörterungen der übrigen Apologeten damit vergleicht*). Aber, so fragen wir, folgt hieraus so ohne Weiteres, dass er damit etwas verschwieg, was er selber gewusst? Steht es von vornherein so fest, dass Minucius die Christologie der übrigen Apologeten getheilt habe? Ja, besass er in dieser schwierigen Frage überhaupt ein Urtheil? Das sind Fragen, die weder von Dombart noch von Paul de Félice beantwortet werden. Beides wird einfach vorausgesetzt. Beides aber sind Voraussetzungen, gegen deren Gültigkeit wir unsrerseits schon jetzt Einspruch erheben dürfen, nachdem wir eine so prinzipielle Differenz zwischen der minucianischen Auffassung vom Christenthum und der der griechischen Apologeten constatirt haben, nachdem wir gesehen haben, wie ein philosophisches Interesse ihn zu einer Verkennung grade des Centrums christlichen Glaubens, der Offenbarung, trieb und wie er auch sonst sich durchaus in philosophischen Gedankenkreisen bewegte. Fassen wir überdies unsere Stelle näher in's Auge. So ganz schwieg Minucius doch nicht. Er lässt den Caecilius unter den christlichen Verehrungsobjekten auch den hominem summo supplicio pro facinore punitum 9, 4 mit anführen und antwortet dem Heiden Punkt für Punkt darauf 29, 2: nam quod religioni nostrae hominem noxium (et crucem eius) adscribitis, longe de vicinia veritatis erratis, qui putatis Deum credi aut

**) Just. I. 13 f. II. 6. Athen. suppl. 10 f. Tat. ad Gr. 5 u. 7. u. ö.

meruisse noxium aut potuisse terrenum. Minucius wendet sich sowohl gegen den noxius als gegen den homo. In seiner Begründung geht er vom Gottesbegriffe aus. Für einen rechten Gott gehalten werden, d. h. ein rechter Gott sein, noxius non meruit: das kann ein Verbrecher nicht aus Mangel an der nöthigen ethischen Beschaffenheit, anderseits terrenus non potuit: das kann auch kein „Irdischer“ wegen der seiner terra anhaftenden Ohnmacht. Da haben wir wieder unsern Begriff der terra und zwar nach seiner physischen Seite. Die Wahl dieses Wortes ist charakteristisch. Warum sagt Minucius nicht einfach hominem, wie auch Caecilius? — Weil er eine Reflexion daran knüpft. Christus ist ihm weder Verbrecher noch Mensch, ja nicht einmal terrenus. Er spricht also Christus die terra ab, mit dieser aber (nach 26, 12) terrenum pondus und damit auch humanum corpus! Die positive Antwort aber wäre: Christus ist seinem Wesen nach spiritus, immortalis substantia, caelestis levitas, caelestis vigor, also ganz dieselben Vorstellungen, unter denen er sich das Göttliche überhaupt denkt. Wir müssen demnach allerdings zugestehen, dass er Christus für einen Gott hält, aber wir fragen, ist die Weise, wie er sich diesen Gott denkt, identisch mit den Vorstellungen, „welche die Apostel von Christo hatten und noch heute die gläubige Christenheit“? — Wir meinen, das ist reiner Doketismus. „Christus, ein Gott,“ so hatte der Christ von aussen vernommen, „Christus, ein Ueberirdischer,“ so lautete die Erklärung im Kopfe des Philosophen. — Man sieht, die kleine Stelle verräth doch noch mehr, als man anzunehmen pflegte, freilich erst, nachdem man in seinen philosophischen Gedankenkreis eingetreten ist. Minucius verschweigt daher seine Ansicht nicht, nur ist es seine persönliche, nicht die allgemein christliche oder wenigstens apologetische Ansicht. Diese aber ist ganz erklärlich, wenn man nur nicht gleich den fertigen Christen bei ihm voraussetzt. Wie und was mag wohl ein Heide bei der ersten Botschaft „Christus ein Gott“ gedacht haben? Wird er gleich auf die gelehrten Erklärungsversuche eines Justin, Athenagoras, Tatian gekommen sein? Das Natürlichste ist, dass er die Erklärung zunächst bei sich selber suchte und zurückgriff auf die Vorstellungen, die er von den Göttern oder dem Göttlichen bereits in sich trug. Ganz so hier. Minucius bedient sich in der That seiner bisherigen, vorwiegend heidnisch-philosophischen Vorstellungen vom Göttlichen, die Stelle ist in Wirklichkeit

Ausdruck einer eigenen Reflexion über den räthselhaften Gottmenschen und somit ein Beleg, dass Minucius einer von denen ist, die nach Athenagoras über Gott nicht von Gott, sondern von sich haben lernen wollen. Er kommt so freilich über eine blosse Negation nicht hinaus. Er vermittelt sich Christi Gottheit, indem er, wie auch 18, 7, von der Menschlichkeit abstrahirt. Eine Anfangsstufe der Spekulation! Etwas Christlich-Positives über Christi Person, sein Verhältniss zum Vater oder gar seiner göttlichen zur menschlichen Natur zu bringen, war er nicht im Stande. Hätte er eine positive Erörterung gegeben, so würde diese nur zu obigen philosophischen Anschauungen geführt haben, die zunächst auf den einen und wahren Gott passen und überdies eine Erklärung des Verhältnisses zu diesem gar nicht zulassen. Eine Auseinandersetzung aber des gegenseitigen Verhältnisses der beiden Naturen wäre einestheils überflüssig gewesen, sofern Minucius in jedem Menschen eine menschlich-sterbliche und göttlich-unsterbliche Natur annimmt, hätte ihn aber wohl anderntheils zum platonischen Dämon geführt. — Sollen wir daher unsrerseits für die Kürze wie die Schwerfälligkeit dieser Stelle eine Erklärung abgeben, so kann es nur die sein, dass er zu einer weiteren Exposition über die Person Christi gar kein Verständniss besass. Die Person Christi wie auch die Geister vor ihrem Fall (c. 26, 7 f.) stehen zu Gott ausser jeglichem Zusammenhang. Sie haben in diesem wesentlich monotheistischen System weder Raum noch Bedeutung. Hiervon noch weiter unten.

Von jetzt ab gelangen wir auf ethisches Gebiet. Grundsätze wie: non facie, sed mente pudorem praestamus (31, 5), welcher sich in unum matrimonium, in pudica convivia, castus sermo, castius corpus, in corporis virginitas perpetua erweist, sowie ihr pulchrum genus vivendi, das sich (7) in innocentia, modestia, mutuus amor zeigt, leiten dahin über. Christlich ist hier ausser dem mutuus amor die Bezeichnung fratres und zwar ut unius Dei parentis homines, ut consortes fidei, ut spei coheredes. Die Stelle erinnert sogar an I. Petr. 3, 7. Indess sind wir auch hier nicht im Stande etwas Bestimmtes über den Inhalt der fides wie der spes anzugeben. Gewiss nur ist aus dem ersten Gliede, dass die Brüdergemeinschaft zunächst auf dem schöpfungsmässigen Naturgrunde, nicht auf dem Boden des gemeinsamen Heiles erwächst. Als Geschöpfe des einen Gottes, nicht aber als Erlöste oder als Brüder Christi nennen sie sich Brüder. Diese Auffassung muss dann auch auf den Inhalt der fides

und spes von Einfluss sein. Dies wird sich in der That später herausstellen.

Mehr scheint der christliche Charakter im Folgenden hervorzutreten. Minucius geht näher auf das Verhältniss von Gott zu Mensch ein und nennt Letzteren Gottes Ebenbild simulacrum. (32, 1). Dies klingt biblisch vgl. Gen. 1, 26—27. Noch mehr aber das Folgende, wo auf eine innerliche Gottesverehrung gedrungen wird: Nonne melius in nostro immo consecrandus est pectore? — litabilis hostia est bonus animus et pura mens et sincera conscientia. Dies wird erklärt mit: igitur qui innocentiam colit Deo supplicat, qui justitiam, Deo libat, qui fraudibus abstinet, propitiat Deum, qui hominem periculo subripit opimam victimam caedit. Auch in diesen Sätzen glaubt man durchaus christlichen Einfluss zu erkennen, namentlich an ψ 50 (51) 18 f. erinnert zu werden. Doch was sollen wir dazu sagen, wenn wir bei Seneca, ja den Stoikern überhaupt auf ganz gleiche Gedanken stossen? So heisst es bei Seneca (Lact. inst. 6, 25, 3) wörtlich: vultisne vos Deum cogitare magnum et placidum... non immolationibus et sanguine multo colendum... sed mente pura, bono honestoque proposito... non templa illi congestis in altitudinem saxis exstruenda sunt: in suo cuique consecrandus est pectore. Aehnlich auch ep. 95, 47: Deum colit qui novit... vis Deum propitiare? bonus esto. Satis illos coluit quisquis imitatus est. Ja bereits vor Seneca und dem Christenthum lässt Cicero den Stoiker Balbus aussprechen: cultus deorum est optimus idemque castissimus atque sanctissimus plenissimusque pietatis, ut eos semper pura, integra, incorrupta et mente et voce veneremur (de n. D. II. 28, 71). So können wir diesen stoischen Einfluss auch in dem Simulacrum erkennen. Minucius fasst dies absolut: jeder Mensch ist Bild Gottes. Er weiss aber nicht, dass die Ebenbildlichkeit dem Menschen durch den Sündenfall verloren gegangen war, wie es doch Tatian ausführt*). Er zeigt uns vielmehr noch in dem nämlichen Capitel die enge Verwandtschaft des Menschen mit Gott, indem er — echt stoisch — Gottes Allgegenwart mit Infusion erklärt: non tantum nobis proximus, sed infusus est 327 (vgl. auch das Interesse für die stoische Stelle 19, 2). Also wieder die materielle Grundanschauung! Wie sehr diese auch formell der Senecas ähnelt, zeigt Sen. ep. 41, 1: prope est a te Deus, tecum est, intus

*) Tatian ad. Gr. c. 12. 13. 15.

est. Auch bei den andern, den späteren Stoikern, kommt der Gedanke öfter vor. So nennt Epiktet wie Marc Aurel die Seele wiederholt ein *ἀπόσπασμα θεοῦ*, letzterer auch *μέρος, ἀπόρροια*, ja XII. 26 den *νοῦς* des Menschen sogar *θεός*. Vgl. Zeller III, 1 S. 200. Aus dieser Gottverwandtschaft leitete Posidonius die Befähigung der Seele zur Erkenntniss der Natur und Cicero die Allgemeinheit des Glaubens an Gott ab. Aehnlich, wie wir sahen, Minucius, 17, 3. 16, 5 und auch hier.

Eine weitere Aehnlichkeit mit Seneca bietet der Gedanke am Anfang des nächsten Capitels: reges statum regni sui per officia ministrorum diversa noverunt: Deo indiciis opus non est: non enim solum in oculis eius, sed in sinu vivimus 33, 1. Man vergleiche Sen. ep. 95, 47: non quaerit ministros deus: quidni? ipse humano generi ministrat, ubique et omnibus praesto est... Diese minucianische Stelle, so geringfügig sie scheint, ist doch dadurch wichtig, dass sie eine der stärksten Abweichungen von der üblichen apologetischen Lehre und zwar der Engellehre enthält. Sowohl Justin wie Athenagoras — Tatian kommt hier nicht in Betracht — lassen die Engel an der Regierung der Welt theilnehmen. Nach Athenagoras Suppl. c. 24 vgl. c. 10 hat Gott die Materie und deren Gebilde ihnen unter einem *ἄρχων τῆς ὕλης καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτῇ εἰδῶν* überlassen. *τοῦτο γὰρ ἡ τῶν ἀγγέλων σύστασις, τῷ θεῷ ἐπὶ προνοίᾳ γεγονέναι τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ διακεκοσμημένοις, ἵνα τὴν μὲν παντελικὴν καὶ γενικὴν ὁ θεὸς ἔχῃ τῶν ὅλων πρόνοιαν, τὴν δὲ ἐπὶ μέρους οἱ ἐπ' αὐτοῖς ταχθέντες ἄγγελοι* (24, 19). Nach Justin II. 5 vgl. I. 6 aber hat ihnen Gott *τὴν μὲν τῶν ἀνθρώπων καὶ τῶν ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανὸν πρόνοιαν* übergeben (II. 6, 4). Von alledem weiss Minucius nichts. Ihm ist Gott nur der verus et solus 27, 7. 18, 10 u. ö., Alles in Allem, numen praestantissimae mentis, quo tota natura inspiretur, moveatur, alatur, gubernetur 17, 4, welcher universa quaecumque sunt, verbo jubet, ratione dispensat, virtute consummat 18, 5, welcher non universitati solummodo, sed et partibus consulit. Das ist seine eigentliche Grundanschauung, die durch die ganze Apologie hindurchgeht und auch an unsrer Stelle hervortritt. Man kann da recht deutlich sehen, was an seiner Anschauung Substanz und was Accidens ist. Es liesse sich nämlich 26, 7 aus der Existenz gefallener Geister (sunt enim etc.) auf die Schöpfung von Engeln und von dieser wieder auf einen Zweck derselben, eine ähnliche Theilnahme am Weltregiment, wie bei Justin und Athenagoras, schliessen. Doch

wie ist das mit unserer Stelle, wie mit der ganzen bisherigen Anschauung zu vereinigen? Das ist die Frage, die Minucius selber offen gelassen hat, Weit entfernt, den Leser über die ursprüngliche Weltstellung der „unreinen Geister," vor allem über ihr ursprüngliches Verhältniss zu Gott aufzuklären — die wenigen Andeutungen c. 26 besagen nicht viel —, referirt er nur, was er von ihnen nach dem Falle weiss und verweilt mit Vorliebe bei jenen Anekdoten (durch's ganze c. 27), für welche er wohl bei seinen abergläubischen Zeitgenossen ein grosses Interesse voraussetzen durfte, für die wohl bei ihm selbst ein solches vorhanden war. Man merkt es der umständlichen Schilderung dämonischer Einwirkung (c. 27) an, wie wenig hier der wissenschaftliche Standpunkt zu seinem Rechte kommt und andererseits an der mageren philosophischen Exposition in c. 26, wie wenig tief diese Dämonologie in seine ganze Grundanschauung eingedrungen ist. Sie ist ein aufgepfropftes Reis. Ein Blick aber auf das Wort Senecas zeigt, wie leicht dessen Anschauung mit der unseres Apologeten zu vereinigen ist und wie sehr hier der heidnisch-philosophische Einfluss den christlich-apologetischen überwiegt.

Der nämliche Einfluss macht sich noch in einem Andern geltend. Obiger bonus animus, jene pura mens und sincera conscientia 32, 2 werden durch den Satz näher bestimmt 32, 3: igitur qui innocentiam colit, Deo supplicat, qui justitiam, Deo libat, qui fraudibus abstinet, propitiat Deum, qui hominem periculo subripit, opimam victimam caedit ....: sic apud nos religiosior est ille qui justior. Sie werden hier durch die vier Tugenden: Unschuld (Unschädlichkeit), Gerechtigkeit, Ehrlichkeit und sogar Hilfsbereitschaft (Menschenliebe?) erläutert und die ganze religio, der eben jener bonus animus etc. eignen soll, mit der justitia identifizirt. Damit aber wird die Religion zur Moral, werden die Pflichten gegen Gott zu Pflichten gegen die Menschen, welche beide sich zusammenfassen in der einen Forderung der Gerechtigkeit. Auch dieser Gedanke, wonach die Religiosität oder Frömmigkeit der eine Theil der Gerechtigkeit sei, deren anderer sich auf die Menschen erstrecke, ist echt philosophisch. Es ist die doppelte Gerechtigkeit der Stoiker, welche diese von Plato herübergenommen haben. Vgl. Zeller III, 1. S. 241, 2. Ueberweg I. S. 156. Diese Anschauung geht übrigens durch die ganze Apologie. Sie zeigt sich in Verbindungen wie impii injustique 35, 4, innoxie religioseque 33, 3, besonders in

der Erörterung über die Gottlosigkeit der römischen Vorfahren c. 25. Mithin abermals philosophische Münze unter christlichem Gepräge (sic, apud nos).

Noch mehr verräth sich der Philosoph im Folgenden. Es handelt sich um die Unsichtbarkeit Gottes 31, 4: Deum quem colimus nec ostendimus nec videmus. Minucius steigert den Satz, indem er hinzusetzt: immo ex hoc Deum credimus, quod eum sentire possumus, videre non possumus. Da haben wir das Wesen christlichen Glaubens, wie es Hebr. 11, 1 ausgesprochen ist: eine innere Ueberzeugung unabhängig, ja entgegengesetzt aller sinnlichen Wahrnehmung. Wird dieses Princip aufgestellt, so wird — muss man erwarten — obiges Erkenntnissprinzip ratio et sensus nothwendig aufgehoben. Minucius thut weder das eine noch das andere. Er mildert die Schroffheit des Satzes mit einem Zwischensatze: quod eum sentire possumus und beweist damit, wie wenig er vom alten Prinzipe lassen, wie wenig er gegen obiges per quae Deum adgnoscimus, sentimus 17, 2 verstossen will. Er geht aber noch weiter. Es folgt nämlich die Begründung des ausgesprochenen Satzes: in operibus enim eius et in mundi omnibus motibus virtutem eius semper praesentem aspicimus, cum tonat, fulgurat, fulminat, cum serenat. Was hat er begründet? — Offenbar nicht das credimus quod videre non possumus, sondern vielmehr das credimus quod sentire possumus, nämlich Gott in seiner Kraftäusserung, womit er sich uns bemerkbar macht. Da aber dieses sentire Deum nur durch obiges sensus et ratio möglich ist, so hat Minucius nicht das christliche Glaubensprinzip, sondern sein altes philosophisches Erkenntnissprinzip, also grade das Gegentheil nachgewiesen. Der Glaube wird zum Wissen, die innere Ueberzeugung zur äusseren Ueberführung.*)

Man ersieht hieraus, welchen Einfluss der Philosoph auf sein christliches Verständniss ausgeübt hat. Ohne Zweifel ist ihm der christliche Satz von aussen zugegangen, er hat ihn aber nicht verstanden. Er vermischte das Neue mit dem Alten, so dass zuletzt jenes von diesem nicht mehr zu unterscheiden war.

Freilich so ganz ohne Reaction gegen das philosophische Fundament geht es nicht ab. Grade eine Betrachtung über Gottes

*) Charakteristisch dafür sind die Ausdrücke für die Bekehrung des Cäcilius: fateor de providentia, de Deo cedo et de sectae jam nostrae sinceritate consentio.

Grösse war im Stande, die Machtvollkommenheit des menschlichen Erkenntnissvermögens herabzusetzen. Geschah letzteres bezüglich der sinnlichen Wahrnehmung schon vorher, so erleidet jetzt das Erkenntnissprinzip auch an seinem andern Theile, dem Denkvermögen einen Stoss. Minucius vergleicht 32, 8 Gottes Allgegenwart mit den überall hin reichenden Strahlen der Sonne. Quanto magis, so schliesst er, Deus . . . speculator omnium, a quo nullum potest esse secretum, tenebris interest, interest cogitationibus nostris, quasi alteris tenebris! Wenn Minucius 1, 4 die Weisheit, speziell die christliche, lux nennt, hierauf 16, 5 allen Menschen Weisheit, also einen Theil jener lux immanent sein lässt, hier aber von einer Finsterniss, ohne Bild, von der gänzlichen Unzulänglichkeit menschlichen Denkens spricht, so ist dies eine plötzliche Verleugnung des alten Prinzipes, wenigstens nach seinem zweiten Bestandtheil, der ratio. Es ist dies psychologisch und dogmatisch von Interesse. Gleichwie er nämlich oben in philosophischer Ueberlegenheit über die heidnische Thorheit den Christen vergass, so vergisst er jetzt in christlicher Demüthigung unter den überwältigenden Gedanken von Gottes Allgegenwart — den Philosophen. Zugleich aber tritt an Stelle des alten Prinzipes, der Machtvollkommenheit oder doch Selbstständigkeit der Vernunft, ein neues Prinzip, die von aussen kommende Offenbarung. Ist unsere menschliche Vernunft Finsterniss, so kann sie nur des Lichts von draussen warten.

Dieses Offenbarungsprinzip, so unvermittelt es hier herein gebracht wird, so folgelos es gleichsam wieder versprüht, tritt doch im Weiteren dem Vernunftprinzip bewusst entgegen. Sehen wir zu, welches von beiden den Sieg behält.

Ersteres deutet sich schon an in dem heilsgeschichtlichen Excurs über das Schicksal der Juden. Ganz den jüdischen Quellen gemäss wird deren Geschichte unter den Gesichtspunkt göttlicher Erziehung gestellt und ihr gegenwärtiges trauriges Geschick auf ihren Ungehorsam zurückgeführt. Die Heilsvorschriften praecepta salubria waren da, auch die zukünftigen Strafen für deren Uebertretungen vorausgesagt, doch jene wurden nicht befolgt und darum diese nicht vermieden. Hier erscheint der Gedanke der Offenbarung zugleich mit dem des Heils, welche beide dem Menschen von aussen her kundgeben, was ihm nütze sei, sein eignes Suchen daher strenggenommen überflüssig machen. Doch bleibt diese Offenbarung hier noch auf das Gebiet jüdischer Geschichte be-

schränkt. Ausgedehntere Geltung erlangt dieselbe in den Weissagungen der Propheten, wie sie im Folgenden der Philosophie und deren Erkenntnissprinzipe gegenübertreten. Die hierher gehörigen Stellen erfordern eine nähere Berücksichtigung. Es ist vom Weltbrand die Rede (c. 34). Minucius, statt auf die Klage des Cäcilius einzugehen, dass durch diese Lehre alle Naturgesetze bedroht würden, entgegnet nur dies: Ceterum de incendio mundi aut improvisum ignem cadere aut .... non credere vulgaris erroris est. Denn, so fährt er fort, quis sapientium dubitat, quis ignorat omnia quae orta sunt occidere, quae facta sunt, interire? Nachdem er von diesen sapientes die Ansichten der Stoiker, Epikureer und des Plato angeführt hat, schliesst er mit der Recapitulation: ita d. h. weil es die Philosophen alle behaupten, nil mirum est, si ista moles ab eo, quo exstructa est, destruatur. Diese Lehre ist ihm demnach wesentlich durch die Autorität der Philosophen gewiss. Urplötzlich aber, wie ein Einfall, kommt im nächsten Satze die Autorität der Propheten herein, aus deren Weissagungen jene die Wahrheit erborgt und entstellt haben: animadvertis philosophos eadem disputare quae dicimus, non quod nos simus eorum vestigia subsecuti, sed quod illi de divinis praedictionibus profetarum umbram interpolatae veritatis imitati sunt. Mit diesem Satze macht Minucius seine ganze vorausgehende Argumentation zu nichte. Zugleich aber ist dies ein bewusster Gegensatz zur Philosophie überhaupt. Er wirft die Waffen der Vernunft weg und greift zu den neuen der Offenbarung. — Indess, ob auch im nächsten Satze noch diese prophetische Autorität der philosophischen überstellt wird, so fällt es ihm nicht im Entferntesten ein, auch nur ein Wort des vorher Gesagten zurückzunehmen, erklärt es vielmehr darauf ausdrücklich für sein propositum, darzustellen, etiam in hoc sapientes vestros in aliquem modum nobiscum consonare, d. h. also, sich auf jene interpolata veritas weiter zu berufen, ja fährt im Folgenden, in Ausdrücken wie quis tam stultus aut brutus, ut audeat repugnare ruhig fort mit der Vernunft statt mit der Offenbarung zu operiren. Er hebt die alten Waffen wieder auf. Er weiss mit den neuen nichts anzufangen.

Die Argumentation für die Lehre vom Weltbrand fällt ziemlich kärglich aus*). Wir sahen schon, es ist eigentlich nur ein Grund,

*) Unzweifelhaft ist diese dem Apologeten schwer gefallen. Es scheint, er hat sich nicht anders helfen können, als indem er den Unglauben daran für vulgaris

den er angiebt, nämlich, dass mit dem Anfang der Welt auch ihr dereinstiges Ende gesetzt sei. Genauer genommen aber ist der Grund nur die Uebereinstimmung in der philosophisch gebildeten Welt, in der, wie auch Minucius andeutet, der Weltuntergang ein unumstössliches Dogma gewesen zu sein scheint. Der Umstand, dass Minucius hierauf fussend es gar nicht für nöthig hält (ita nil mirum), einen Untergang alles Geschaffenen erst nachzuweisen, beweist daher, wie sehr Minucius selbst in diese Ansicht verstrickt und von der Philosophie noch abhängig war. Dieselbe oberflächliche Argumentation widmet er der Auferstehungslehre 34,10: ceterum quis tam stultus est, ut audeat repugnare, hominem a Deo, ut primum potuisse fingi, ita posse denuo reformari? nihil esse post obitum, et ante ortum nihil fuisse? sicut de nihilo nasci licuit, ita de nihilo licere reparari? Wie dort der Anfang der Welt ihr Ende wahrscheinlich machte, so hier auch ihren zweiten Anfang, ihre Neubildung (reformari, reparari, iterari). Unter dieser Vorstellung erscheint bei Minucius die Auferstehung in beiden Reden vgl. 11, 2 und 8. Er denkt sie sich sicher nach dem Weltbrand, denn dann erst kann von einem perpes vita oder sempiterna poena die Rede sein vgl. 11, 5 und 2. Bis zum Weltbrand bewahrt Gott als der custos elementorum den in seine Urbestandtheile aufgelösten Leib des Menschen auf (vgl. auch reservatur 10). Hierauf beginnt die Neubildung des Menschen. Diese Anschauung führt uns auffallend nahe an die stoische Lehre von dem Kreislauf der Dinge und die damit verbundene Lehre von der *παλιγγενεσία* oder *ἀποκατάστασις*, wonach das Urwesen den Stoff, den es als seinen Leib von sich ausgesondert hat, allmählich wieder in sich aufzehrt, um dann nach einem allgemeinen Weltbrand

error erklärte und positiv sich auf die öffentliche Meinung unter den Gebildeten berief. Dadurch wurde nun die Entgegnung nahe gelegt, dass die Christen diese Lehre von jenen adoptirt hätten. Dieser will Minucius hier vorbeugen, und recurrirt deshalb auf die landläufige selbst von Heiden getheilte Ansicht (z. B. Numenius mit seinem *Πλάτων, ἀττικίζων Μωϋσῆς* vgl. Ueberweg I. S. 286), dass im Gegentheil die Philosophen die Entlehner gewesen seien. Das kommt ihm aber nicht vom Herzen. Formell wie inhaltlich macht es den Eindruck einer unverdauten Weisheit, die er der Zeit nachredet und hier im plötzlichen Bewusstwerden seines Gegensatzes zur Philosophie an den Mann bringt. So plötzlich wie sie gekommen, verschwindet sie auch. Nur einmal noch werden in der Apologie Propheten genannt 35, 1. Dabei ist aber fraglich, ob jüdische oder heidnische gemeint sind. Vgl. auch Dräseke „Brief an Diognet" in Jahrbb. für prot. Theol. 1881. II. S. 272.

ἐκπύρωσις die Welt von Neuem zu bilden vgl. Zeller III. 1, V. 152 und 155. Auch wird es schwer, nach dem was er über den Zwischenzustand vom Tode bis zur Auferstehung sagt, einer materialistischen Auffassung seiner Lehre zu entgehen. Nach 26, 12 zeigt sich der Apologet gegenüber dem Trichotomiker Tatian (c. 12) als Dichotomiker (spiritus et corpus), theilt andrerseits die allgemein apologetische Lehre von der ἀνάστασις τῆς σαρκός, der Auferstehung des alten Leibes. Er selbst erklärt sich 34, 6 gegen die Isolirung des Geistes vom Körper sowie ein Uebergehen desselben in andere Körper, womit er sich demnach für schon genannte dritte Möglichkeit des Fortlebens entscheidet, vgl. 11, 7. Die Frage nach dem Wie dieser Möglichkeit freilich lässt er offen. Wie nämlich verhält sich der Geist, nach 26, 12 inmortalis substantia, caelestis levitas, zu dem *nur* in seinen Elementen noch bestehenden Leib? Ist er überhaupt noch von den Elementen verschieden? Hat sich wohl gar der Leib in die Geistessubstanz aufgelöst? Oder ruht auch diese neben den Urstoffen im Schoosse des göttlichen custos elementorum? — Das sind Fragen, die nicht beantwortet sind, deren Antwort aber, nach aller Voraussicht, wohl nicht ohne stoisch-materialistischen Character ausfallen würde. Das göttlich-materielle Urwesen liegt zu nahe, schon nach 26,12, als dass man an ihm vorüber könnte. — Wie tief nun diese Auferstehung als allgemeines Gesetz in der Natur begründet sei, das sagt uns schliesslich noch die folgende Analogie aus der Natur: vide quam in solacium nostri resurrectionem futuram omnis natura meditetur. Sie erinnert zugleich an die stoische Teleologie, wonach alles für den Menschen geschaffen sei, indem sie auch den Trost der allgemeinen Naturauferstehung in diese Zweckbeziehung der Schöpfung auf den Menschen mit aufgenommen sein lässt.

Also auch diese Lehre ist mit stoischen Grundvorstellungen in Zusammenhang zu bringen. Den eigentlichen Kern derselben, die Auferstehung Christi, hat der Apologet nicht getroffen.

Der folgende, an die Auferstehung sich anlehnende Gedanke des göttlichen Gerichts trägt aber unfraglich christliches Gepräge. Der Wortlaut*) führt sogar auf eine neutestamentliche Stelle: II. Petr 3, 9 zurück, obgleich sie auch bei Justin I. 28, II. 7 sich findet und sich daher auch als christlichen locus communis auffassen

*) quorum error augetur et in saeculo libertate remissa et Dei patientia maxima, cuius quanto judicium tardum, tanto magis justum est.

lässt. Minucius geht näher darauf ein und verweilt mit besonderem Interesse bei der Schilderung der Gerichtsstrafen 35, 3. Es ist interessant, wie er sich dieselben vorstellt: illic sapiens ignis membra urit et reficit, carpit et nutrit. Sicut ignes fulminum corpora tangunt nec absumunt, sicut ignes Aetnaei montis et Vesuvi montis et ardentium ubique terrarum flagrant nec erogantur: ita poenale illud incendium non damnis ardentium pascitur, sed inexesa corporum laceratione nutritur. Woher weiss er das so genau? Aus der Schrift gewiss nicht. Ein Blick aber auf Vergil Aen. VI, 559—637 und Homer Od. XI, 558—600 lässt uns die Quelle erkennen. Es ist die alte heidnische Vorstellung von der Ewigkeit göttlicher Strafen, nach der einem Tityon die angefressene Leber stets wieder nachwuchs, nach der einem Sisyphus der tückische Marmor immer wieder entrollte, vor dem lechzenden Tantalus das Wasser eiligst verlief oder den Danaiden das Fass sich nimmer füllen wollte. Nach diesen Vorstellungen denkt er sich auch die Strafwürdigen im ewigen Feuer des christlichen Gerichtes: die angebrannten Theile des Körpers wachsen wieder nach und das Feuer erhielt so immer neue Nahrung. Es ist dies also wieder eine subjective Reflexion, die durch heidnische Anschauungsweise veranlasst wurde.

Dogmatisch wichtig ist nun die Frage, wer bestraft wird. Minucius antwortet darauf ausdrücklich im Folgenden: ei qui Deum nesciunt 35, 4 und fügt als Erläuterung hinzu: cum parentem omnium et omnium dominum non minoris sceleris sit ignorare quam laedere. Eine Vergleichung mit 17, 3: ignorare nec fas nec licet etc zeigt uns, dass wir es hier mit dem alten stoischen Grundsatz der Benutzung natürlicher Anlage zu thun haben, speziell der Forderung mit den gottgegebenen, zur Gotteserkenntniss bestimmten Naturanlagen (sensus, ratio 16, 5, vultus erectus, suspectus in caelum 17, 2) Gott wirklich auch zu erkennen. Diese Forderung ist hier zur höchsten Pflicht erhoben, deren Verletzung, als ein Sacrilegium (17, 3), auch die höchste Strafe nach sich zieht. Daher geht Minucius zu dem Satze fort 35, 5: inperitia Dei sufficit ad poenam. Die nothwendige Consequenz dieses stoisch gefärbten Satzes wäre nun: notitia Dei sufficit ad veniam. Allein, das scheint ihm doch etwas zu viel behauptet zu sein. Darum schwächt er es ab in dem Satze, dessen Schwerfälligkeit man anmerkt, dass sein Inhalt dem Schreiber zu

schaffen gemacht hat*): et quamquam inperitia Dei sufficit ad poenam, ita, ut notitia prosit ad veniam, tamen si vobiscum Christiani comparemur, quamvis in nonnullis disciplina nostra minor est, multo tamen vobis meliores deprehendemur. Er hält zur rechten Zeit zurück. Da jene Grundforderung an die Menschen wesentlich an deren Intelligenz gerichtet war, Minucius aber auf diesem Gebiete die heidnische Philosophie dem Christenthum noch immer überlegen weiss, so sieht er sich gezwungen, jene Forderung nicht ausschliesslich auf die Intelligenz zu beschränken. Es kommt vielmehr noch etwas hinzu, wie dieser Satz beweist und die nächsten Sätze uns erklären. Um nämlich multo meliores als die Heiden befunden zu werden, muss mit der notitia Dei noch der schuldlose Lebenswandel der Christen verbunden sein (35, 6): vos enim adulteria prohibetis et facitis, nos uxoribus nostris solummodo viri nascimur: vos scelera admissa punitis, apud nos et cogitare peccare est: vos conscios timetis, nos etiam conscientiam solam, sine qua esse non possumus: denique de vestro numero carcer exaestuat, Christianus ibi nullus etc. Es ist also speziell Keuschheit, Herzensreinheit, ein gutes Gewissen gemeint, die wir, als die rechte Gesinnung zumeist den Nebenmenschen gegenüber, zusammenfassen können in obige justitia gegenüber der heidnischen injustitia, impietas, 32, 3 vgl. 35, 4. Diese justitia kommt sonach zur notitia Dei hinzu, ergänzt deren prodest zu einem sufficit. Sollen wir dies christlich-dogmatisch ausdrücken, so ergiebt sich der minucianische Satz: Gotteserkenntniss und Gerechtigkeit erwirken das Heil: notitia (Dei) et justitia justificant. Dadurch gelangt obiger Satz 32, 3: sic apud nos religiosior est ille qui justior zu seinem Rechte, erleidet aber auch andrerseits eine Beschränkung, indem eben die Pflichten gegen Gott nicht nur identisch sind mit denen gegen die Menschen, sondern neben letzteren die notitia Dei als eine besondere, ja als erste der Pflichten sich hervorhebt. Wir sehen hierin wieder eine deutliche Vermischung philosophischer und christlicher Anschauungen. Christlich ist die Erwartung eines zukünftigen Gerichtes. Philosophisch ist die Forderung der notitia Dei auf Grund der gegebenen Naturanlagen. Vermischung beider ist die grade auf die inperitia Dei gesetzte Feuerstrafe und die theilweise (prodest) auf die notitia,

*) Dass letzteres überhaupt der Fall gewesen ist, deutet er selbst an 39, 1: ea quae facilius est sentire, quam dicere etc.

andererntheils auf die justitia gesetzte Erwirkung der Gnade. Man merkt, es fehlt dieser Auffassung jede Spur des christlichen Begriffes der Sünde; die justitia civilis ist ihrestheils identisch mit justitia coram Deo. Darum fehlt hier auch der eigentliche Begriff der Gnade d. i. Vergebung aus grundloser Barmherzigkeit, sondern venia ist mehr die Errungenschaft menschlicher Verdienste, gleichsam eine juristische Gegenleistung Gottes für vorher vom Menschen erfüllte Bedingungen.

Diese Aeusserlichkeit der Auffassung tritt noch mehr hervor in der folgenden Erörterung über das Fatum, das Minucius gegenüber dem cäcilianischen Vorwurf der Identifizirung mit Gott durchaus von Gott unterscheidet (vgl. 11, 6): quid enim aliud est fatum quam quod te unoquoque nostrum Deus fatus est? qui cum possit praescire materiam, pro meritis et qualitatibus singulorum etiam fata determinat. Gott sieht die ethische Beschaffenheit (materiam) der Menschen und in ihr alle zukünftigen Handlungen wie deren sittlichen Werth (merita et qualitates) gleichsam implicite voraus*) und bestimmt darnach die Geschicke (fata), d. h. nach 11, 5 entweder poenam sempiternam oder vitam beatam et perpetem. Denn 36, 1: sit sors (äussere Lebensstellung) fortunae, mens tamen libera est et ideo actus hominis, non dignitas judicatur. Sonach ist Jeder seines Glückes oder besser seines Seelenheiles Schmied. Er vermag es mittelst der ihm gelassenen Freiheit, *er soll* es mittelst, ja wegen der ihm gegebenen göttlichen Vernunft 16, 5 und wegen der für ihn geschaffenen Welt 17, 6. 38, 1 u. ö. — Man erkennt hier abermals ein Verhältniss der Menschen zu Gott, welches durch keine Sünde gestört ist, vermisst jede Spur eines inneren sündlichen Habitus und im Wesensbegriff Gottes selbst jede Andeutung von Heiligkeit, die der Sünde feindlich gegenübersteht. Es ist hier nur der gerechte Gott, der auch von den Menschen neben der Erkenntniss von ihm nur Gerechtigkeit verlangt. Sind diese Bedingungen erfüllt, so hat ein Jeder Anspruch auf's ewige Leben.

Von nun an werden die christlichen Anklänge immer seltener. Nachdem die spezifisch christlichen Grundgedanken, wie das

*) Ein paulinischer Gedanke Röm. 8, 29. 11, 2 οὓς προέγνω καὶ προώρισεν συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνος τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ etc. Dass dieser Gedanke aber zu damaliger Zeit allgemein war, scheint Justin I. 44 und Tatian ad Gr. 7 im Verein mit unserer Stelle zu beweisen. Eine direkte Abhängigkeit braucht ebensowenig, wie bei der Petrusstelle in c. 34, 12, angenommen zu werden.

Glaubens- und Offenbarungsprinzip endgültig überwunden sind, breiten sich die philosophischen immer weiter aus und lassen einige, reminiscenzartig auftauchende, christliche Gedanken nicht aufkommen. Die letzten Capitel athmen durchweg römisch-stoischen Geist. Die Armuth gilt nicht als infamia, sondern als gloria, weil durch sie die Geisteskräfte gestählt werden 36, 3. Wahrhaft arm ist nur der Ungenügsame, der nie genug hat; wahrhaft reich aber, der keine Bedürfnisse kennt: qui non eget, qui non inhiat alieno, qui Deo dives est*). Es folgt sogar ein Wort Senecas: nemo tam pauper potest esse quam natus est**). Ferner gilt die Armuth nicht nur für eine Tugend (gloria), sondern auch für ein Glück: igitur ut qui viam terit, eo felicior quo levior incedit... non sub divitiarum onere suspirat. Darum verachten die Christen den Reichthum und streben lieber nach innocentia und patientia; wäre er es werth, sie würden Gott darum bitten. Aehnlich Seneca prov. 6, 1: numquid hoc quoque aliquis a deo exigit, ut bonorum virorum etiam sarcinas servet? remittunt ipsi hanc deo curam, externa contemnunt. Democritus divitias projecit onus illas bonae mentis existimans. — Mehr aber als beim Ertragen von Armuth offenbart sich stoische Denkweise beim Erdulden des Unglückes. Hier glaubt man keinen Christen, sondern einen Römer zu hören: et quod corporis humana vitia sentimus et patimur, non poena, militia est. fortitudo enim in infirmitatibus roboratur et calamitas saepius disciplina virtutis est. vires denique et mentis et corporis sine laboris exercitatione torpescunt. Eine Vergleichung mit Senecas de providentia c. 2-4 lässt die Geistesverwandtschaft erkennen. Man liest hier ganz ähnliche Grundsätze: marcet sine adversario virtus 2, 4 oder calamitates terroresque mortalium sub jugum mittere proprium magni viri est 4, 1. Ganz evident aber ist die Aehnlichkeit 4, 6: calamitas virtutis occasio. Hieran reiht sich im Octavius der andere stoische Gedanke von der Erprobung des Menschen im Unglück, womit Minucius dem Einwurf des Cäcilius begegnet, als könnte und wollte Gott nicht helfen (9):

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*) Vielleicht eine biblische Reminiscenz Luc. 12, 21.

**) Sen. prov. 6, 6. Der daran gefügte Gedanke: aves sine patrimonio vivunt et in diem pascuntur könnte an die Bergpredigt erinnern Matth. 6, 26. Dem daselbst ausgesprochenen Gedanken von der gleichmässigen Fürsorge Gottes für alle seine Geschöpfe hätte jedoch Minucius sofort die echt stoische Wendung von der endgültigen Fürsorge Gottes für die Menschen gegeben: et haec nobis tamen nata sunt.

er mit dem Hinweis auf ihre zukünftige wie gegenwärtige Glückseligkeit: quieti, modesti, Dei nostri liberalitate securi spem futurae felicitatis fide praesentis eius majestatis animamus. sic et beati resurgimus et futuri contemplatione jam vivimus. Die Sätze sind von Interesse. Sie erschliessen uns einen Einblick in sein ganzes Christenthum. Glaube, wie wir sahen, im Verein mit der Tugend, Hoffnung, Glück, diese charakterisiren den Christen. Der Glaube, seinem Wesen nach Erkenntniss, ist, wie wir jetzt endlich bestimmt erfahren, seinem Inhalt nach die Erkenntniss von dem einen Gotte. Letzterer tritt den Menschen in dreifacher Gestalt gegenüber: Als der Welt Schöpfer (parens), Erhalter (providentia) und als ihr Zerstörer (c. 34), womit er zugleich zum Richter der Menschen wird (c. 35). Vor diesem Richter ist neben einem tugendhaften Leben voll Keuschheit, Unschuld, namentlich Gerechtigkeit, der christlichen Cardinaltugend, die zugleich den Kern aller Frömmigkeit bildet, vor allem die notitia Dei nothwendig zur Vermeidung der zukünftigen Gerichtsstrafen, zur Erlangung des ewigen Lebens. Diese notitia Dei ist hier identisch mit der fides praesentis Dei majestatis. Sie belebt, erwirkt ihrerseits die Hoffnung futurae felicitatis d. i. auf ein Fortleben nach dem Tode, frei von jenen Strafqualen, und die Hoffnung wiederum auf diese zukünftige Glückseligkeit erwirkt letztere schon hier. Die Gewissheit nämlich vor dem grössten Unglück, den ewigen Strafen, sicher zu sein, macht ruhig in gegenwärtigem Unglück. Die Gewissheit aber, des höchsten Glückes theilhaftig zu werden, macht bescheiden in den Ansprüchen auf irdische Glücksgüter und lässt die Christen mit dem sich begnügen, was ihnen die Freigebigkeit des einen Gottes bescheert hat.

So bildet das Wesentliche im minucianischen Christenthum in der That ein „moral-philosophischer Monotheismus". Dieser Glaube an den einen Gott ist das unum bonum quod sapimus omnes (31, 6), macht die Christen zu Brüdern, ut unius Dei parentis homines, ut consortes fidei, ut spei coheredes (31, 8). Von dessen Wahrheit ist der Apologet selbst durchdrungen und glaubt dabei so fest auf ureignem christlichen Boden zu stehen, dass er — das erste Mal! — eine scharfe Grenzlinie zieht zwischen Christen und Philosophen und diesen ein Wort entgegenschleudert, welches man eher einem Tatian als einem Minucius Felix zutrauen würde 39, 5: nos philosophorum supercilia contemnimus, quos corruptores et

adulteros novimus et tyrannos et semper adversus sua vitia facundos. Seiner christlichen Vorzüge sich bewusst, fügt er hinzu: nos qui non habitu sapientiam sed mente praeferimus, non eloquimur magna, sed vivimus, gloriamur nos consecutos quod illi summa intentione quaesiverunt nec invenire potuerunt. quid ingrati sumus, quid nobis invidemus, si veritas divinitatis nostri temporis aetate maturuit?

Hier am Schlusse spricht er es selber aus, was er für das Wesen des Christenthums hält: es ist die Wahrheit des Monotheismus gegenüber dem Irrthum heidnischer Vielgötterei, die lux sapientiae et veritatis, zu der er selbst aus der Tiefe finsteren Aberglaubens emporgetaucht war (1, 4). Er ist nichts Neues, dieser eine Gott. Inmitten des Heidenthums lebte er bereits im natürlichen Volksbewusstsein, in den Werken der Poëten, in den Systemen der Philosophen, aber unter Irrthum tief versteckt (19, 4). Als nun die Menschen gebildeter und aufgeklärter zu werden anfingen (politiores et minus creduli 26, 6), da haben die Philosophen ihn gesucht, doch die Christen erst gefunden. Sie haben ihn, der als insita sapientia, als blosser Keim im Menschengeiste lag, durch denkende Betrachtung des Himmels zur Reife gebracht und in einer vernunftgemässen Lehre, die sie ersannen, der Menschheit zum Geschenk gemacht.

Diese Gesammtauffassung vom Christenthum hier am Schlusse führt uns zu dem sogenannten *λόγος σπερματικός* der ersten Kirchenväter, vor allem Justins.*) Es ist bekannt, dass der Name dieses *λόγος σπερματικός* zwar stoischer Herkunft, aber aller Beziehung auf die natürliche Entwickelung entäussert, bei Justin nur den Logos in seiner geistigen und sittlichen Einwirkung auf den Menschen bedeutet.**) Während der Logos aber bei Justin als die göttliche Vernunft aus Gott herausgehoben ist, erscheint er bei Minucius noch durchaus ungetrennt von ihm: numen praestantissimae mentis 17, 4 summus opifex et perfecta ratio 17, 6, qui omnia verbo jubet, ratione dispensat, virtute consummat 18, 7.***) Während dort der Logos persönlich hervorgetreten ist in Christo I. 5. II. 6, liegt er hier als ein Theil Gottes (infusus 32, 7), als

*) I. 46. II. 8 u. 10. Auch Clem. Alex. Strom. V. 3. I. 5. VI. 5. Coh. VI. 59; selbst Tertullians Wort von der anima naturaliter christiana gehört hierher (de test. an. 1 f. Apol. 17).

**) Ueberweg II. S. 40.

***) Zur Illustrirung des Unterschiedes auch von Athenagoras diene der Hinweis auf das charakteristische *διὰ τοῦ παρ' αὐτοῦ λόγου* Suppl. 4, 15. 10, 20.

eine Potentialität (ingenium 16, 5) im Menschen selbst, die sich bewusst oder unbewusst zu einer inneren sapientia auswirkt. Während also dort der Mensch gewordene Logos die volle Wahrheit verkündet, nachdem er sich schon vorher solchen, die mit ihm gelebt hatten, theilweise kund gethan, so ist diese Wahrheit bei Minucius noch die reine stoische πρόληψις, die durch die Christen nur zur ἐπιστήμη geworden und zwar, wie wir sahen, dadurch, dass sie caelum magis quam aurum suspexerunt und dieses wieder durch sensus et ratio, durch den natürlichen Logos, die allgemein-menschliche Vernunft. Dies ist der prinzipielle Unterschied unseres Apologeten von Justin. Aus dieser Auffassung versteht man auch die Grundsätze: prius nosse quam timere et colere oder sibi credere 24, 2, hieraus erklärt sich die hohe Gerichtsstrafe auf die inperitia Dei, die grosse Pflicht der notitia Dei, die mit der justitia das Heil erwirkt, und schliesslich auch die den gebildeten Heiden gegenüber geltend gemachte Pflicht philosophischer Spekulation zum Zwecke der Auswirkung der inneren ratio wie zum Zwecke der Erkenntniss Gottes aus dem Weltall heraus. Wie nahe sich in alle diesem der Apologet Minucius mit dem Stoiker Balbus berühren, zeigen diese Worte II. 61, 153: Quae contuens (d. h. den gestirnten Himmel) animus accipit ab his cognitionem deorum, ex qua oritur pietas, cui conjuncta est justitia reliquaeque virtutes, e quibus vita beata existit par et similis deorum.*)

D. Zusammenfassende Kritik. Folgerungen.

So tritt hier am Schluss noch einmal der Philosoph in seiner ganzen Eigenthümlichkeit hervor. Im Einzelnen wie im Allgemeinen trafen wir auf eine wesentlich philosophische Auffassung des christlichen Lehrmaterials. Nur Weniges zeugte von christlichem Verständniss. Sollen wir den Philosophen an ihm näher charakterisiren, so sehen wir in ihm einen Eklektiker von überwiegend stoischer Färbung, dessen Anschauungskreis nicht allzuweit über den der Popularphilosophie hinausreicht.**) Mit den Zeitgenossen verglichen kommt er jenen späteren, platonisirenden Stoikern am

*) Vgl. Oct. 37, 8: absque enim notitia Dei quae potest esse solida felicitas?

**) So ist die von Minucius so oft berührte, in ihm selbst tief gewurzelte Ansicht von dem eingepflanzten Gottesbegriff einer von den Lieblingssätzen der Popularphilosophie seit Antiochus und Cicero. Zeller III, 2. S. 207.

nächsten, zu denen ein Seneca, Epiktet und Marc Aurel zählten.*) Bei diesen war an Stelle des früheren, strengen Monismus, wonach theils materialistisch der vernünftig-göttliche Urstoff in allen Menschen sich vorfand, theils deterministisch die göttliche Vernunft alles in der Welt bestimmte, durch die trüben Erfahrungen mit der sittenlosen, unvernünftigen Wirklichkeit ein ethischer Dualismus von Vernunft und Sinnlichkeit, von Geist und Körper getreten.**) Dieser ist, wenn auch nur kurz angedeutet, bei Minucius gleichfalls zu finden vgl. 26, 12 u. 7 f. Doch steht Minucius mehr noch auf dem Boden der älteren Stoiker, indem dieser Dualismus, wie wir sahen, nicht rein ethisch, sondern seinem andern Theile nach physisch war, und indem diesem physischen Dualismus noch immer eine monistische Anschauung zu Grunde lag, andrerseits aber insofern, als die aus dem ethischen Dualismus zu ziehende Consequenz auf die allgemeine Sündhaftigkeit und Hilfsbedürftigkeit der Menschen gänzlich fehlte, welche doch jene späteren Stoiker mehr oder weniger alle aussprechen***) und wodurch sie dem Christenthum bei weitem näher kommen, als er, der christliche Apologet.†)

Dieser Fond philosophischer Anschauungen ist nun auf seine Auffassung des Christenthums von grösstem Einfluss gewesen. Wir sahen bereits oben, wie ihn ein spezifischphilosophisches Interesse auf den Boden der Philosophie hinübertrieb und wie er dort das Christenthum auf dem stoischen Erkenntnissprinzip aufbaute. Im Menschen selbst liegt die christliche Wahrheit d. i. die Vernunft und in dieser keimartig die höchste Vernunft und Weisheit: der eine Gott. Dass auf diesem Vernunftfundament neben der Philosophie (16, 5) das geoffenbarte Christenthum nicht Raum finden konnte, ist klar und wohl auch vom Apologeten gefühlt worden, wie die plötzlichen Gedanken von der Finsterniss menschlichen Denkens und von der Autorität prophetischer Weissagungen nahe-

*) Zeller III, 2. S. 235 f.

**) Die Klagen Senecas über das Gefängniss dieses Leibes sind ja bekannt genug. Vgl. bes. Cons. ad Marc. und ad Polyb. Zeller III, 1. S. 204.

***) Zeller III, 2. S. 236 f.

†) Auch vermissen wir die von den Apologeten und späteren Stoikern so nachdrücklich betonte Menschenliebe, obwohl deren Voraussetzung, der Kosmopolitismus, vorhanden ist (c. 17). Ansätze dazu finden sich c. 31, 8. 32, 3. Der Gedanke der Feindesliebe, wie er von den Apologeten so oft den Heiden gegenüber vertreten wird, fehlt hier gänzlich. Vgl. dagegen nur Athen. c. 11, 5. 12, 21.

legen. Letztere waren eben zu schwach, um sich neben der Vernunft Raum zu schaffen oder gar ein Fundament für sich zu bilden. Im Gegentheil, wie fest jenes Prinzip der sensus et ratio in der Anschauung des Apologeten gegründet lag, zeigt obiges Missverständniss des christlichen Glaubensprinzips: er kann sich eine Ueberzeugung, einen Glauben, schlechterdings nicht denken ohne Vermittelung der äusseren Wahrnehmung und ohne Mitthätigkeit der eigenen Vernunft. Damit fehlt seiner Auffassung das eine wesentliche Stück des Christenthums, die Offenbarung.*) Dieses philosophisch-intellectuelle Interesse aber in Verbindung mit spezifisch stoischen Anschauungen lässt ihn auch die andere Hälfte des Christenthums gänzlich verfehlen. Er hat zunächst gar kein Verständniss von der Sünde, weder nach ihrer ethischen noch ihrer habituellen Seite. Da droht Gott der gesammten Welt mit plötzlicher Feuervernichtung. Niemand aber erfährt warum. Weit entfernt, von einem Falle der Menschheit in der Vorzeit zu vermelden und dem seitdem widergöttlich gewordenen Sinn der Menschheit, welcher Gottes Zorn erregt und Strafe fordert, lässt Minucius nur die Deum nescientes bedroht sein und nicht einmal ganz mit Recht, da sie erst von den Dämonen geblendet sind, qui pravas religiones induxerunt (c. 26), inrepunt corporibus, terrent mentes etc. (c. 27). Ja eigentlich sind sogar diese nicht recht strafbar, da auch sie die Getäuschten sind: nam falluntur et fallunt, nescientes sinceram veritatem 27, 2. Es fehlt der Sünde also gerade ihr Charakteristisches: das Ethische**) und das der Menschennatur Habituelle. Sie ist dem Minucius wesentlich Unwissenheit und durchaus individuell. Selbst im Einzelnen kann sie nicht eigentlich ein Habitus sein, denn der Mensch hat volle Freiheit (36, 1) und wenn auch Gott nach der materia, der Geistesrichtung (also etwas Habituellem) die Geschicke bestimmt, so ist doch sie es nicht, sondern sind es die Handlungen, welche bestraft werden 36, 1. Wie

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*) Der 19, 4 ausgesprochene, minucianischer Ansicht gerade entgegengesetzte Gedanke: eo altior et sublimior aquae et spiritus ratio, quam ut ab homine potuerit inveniri, a deo traditum, auf den sich Faber im Interesse der Offenbarung stützt (Comment. S. 29), ist ein mit Recht neuerdings mehr und mehr geltend gemachtes Glossem. Halm S. 26. Dombart S. 52. Cornelissen S. 30.

**) Nur scheinbar hat sie ethische Wurzel, wenn sie als Folge des Nichtgebrauchs gottgegebener Vernunftkräfte und der Nichtbefolgung göttlichen Willens erscheint 17, 3. Denn diesen Willen zu thun bedarf es selbst erst der Erkenntniss desselben aus der im Weltall verbreiteten Vernünftigkeit.

kann auch bei minucianischer Ansicht an einen sündigen Habitus des Menschen gedacht werden, wenn nach seiner echt stoischen Ansicht Gott selbst dem Menschen innewohnt (infusus), wenn 26, 12 die menschliche Seele als inmortalis substantia der göttlichen gleich gestellt wird! Nicht einmal der menschliche Körper, wie doch die späteren Stoiker anzunehmen geneigt waren, kann als Sitz der Sünde angesehen werden, obwohl ein Ansatz zu dieser Anschauung vorhanden ist. Denn der irdische Körper war vorwiegend als Sitz physischer Ohnmacht gedacht und die Consequenzen aus der anderen Seite der Körperlichkeit, der sittlichen Unzulänglichkeit auf eine allgemeine sündhafte Anlage der Menschen, wie gesehen, waren gänzlich unterlassen. — So gelangt er gerade zu der umgekehrten Ansicht: das Christenthum ruht seinem Wesen nach im Innern des Menschen und die Sünde — wenn überhaupt von dieser zu reden — kommt in den Dämonen von aussen. Wie soll da die Rede sein von Offenbarung, von einem Logos als deren persönlichem Ausdruck, von Schriftautorität gegenüber der Autorität der menschlichen Vernunft, wie die Rede sein von der Erlösungsbedürftigkeit aller Menschen, von deren faktischer Erlösung, von Versöhnung mit Gott, von Gnadengemeinschaft und Gnadenmitteln? Für alles das ist in seiner Auffassung kein Raum. Damit aber ist das eigentliche Centrum des Christenthums, die Heilsoffenbarung, gänzlich verfehlt. Das minucianische Christenthum erscheint nur als eine Aufklärung, als die Enthüllung einer in der Welt und im Menschen liegenden Wahrheit, als die Entzifferung des göttlichen Autors aus dem aufgeschlagenen Buche der Schöpfung (c. 17).

Ist das blosses Accidenz? Sind das nur „historische und philosophische Gründe für die Existenz und die Regierung Gottes"? — Das ist philosophische Grundanschauung, aus welcher heraus jene einzelnen Argumente erst erwachsen sind.

So ist in dem bekehrten Heiden das Heidnisch-Philosophische nicht nur Prius gewesen, sondern auch Prius geblieben. Die Philosophie herrscht noch immer vor und hat hier auf seine Denkweise derartig eingewirkt, dass sie ihn zu einer richtigen Auffassung des Christenthums nicht nur nicht führte, sondern sogar direkt davon abzog. Dass sich der Apologet von jener so gängeln liess und dabei doch glaubte, als guter Christ zu handeln, beweist uns, wie wenig er Christenthum und Philosophie zu unterscheiden im

Stande und wie wenig er in das eigentliche Wesen des Christenthums eingedrungen war. Für die centralen christlichen Wahrheiten besass er zur Zeit weder das nöthige Verständniss noch — wie wir schliessen — die nöthige Unterweisung. Prüfen wir beispielsweise seine Vorstellung und seine Kenntniss von Christus. Wie denkt er sich ihn? Als Erlöser? — Unmöglich, denn er kennt keine Erlösung, keine Sünde, die die Menschheit fesselt. Oder als persönliche Offenbarung Gottes wie Justin? — Ebensowenig, denn Gott hat sich bereits geoffenbart in der Welt, im einzelnen Menschen. Es gilt nur ihn zu finden. Ihn zu suchen ist oberste Pflicht, dies zu unterlassen Sacrileg (17, 3. 24, 2). Christus könnte höchstens als Erster unter den nostrates ihn gefunden haben und daraus prudentiam commentum esse et tradidisse ceteris disciplinam. Dann wäre er allerdings dem Justin'schen Christus ähnlich (Ap. I. 13), der Lehrer der Menschen (ceteris), der Aufklärer von dem Wahn des heidnischen Polytheismus und dessen unsittlichem Einfluss. Aber dann wäre seine Gottheit ganz überflüssig. Christus hätte nur geleistet, was jeder Andere auch hätte leisten können, ja wozu im Grunde Alle verpflichtet waren. Ihm gebührte nur, wie anderen repertores artium 16, 5, ein hervorragendes ingenium, und höchstens die Priorität seiner „Erfindung" (38, 6) vor denen anderer — Menschen. Das zeugt doch wahrlich weder von christlichem Verständniss noch von christlicher Unterweisung! Sogar Christus als Wunderthäter, dessen Thaten doch im Gemeindebewusstsein lebendig und wohl das Erste waren, was von einem Bekehrten gehört und gefasst werden konnte, sogar dieser wird in Frage gestellt durch obigen Ausspruch über die Wunder überhaupt, welchen selbst Dombart*) für ein „bedenkliches Argument" erklärt 20, 4: quae sie essent facta, fierent: quia fieri non possunt, ideo nec facta sunt. Selbst wenn man annähme, dieser Satz sei ihm im Uebereifer gegen das abergläubische Heidenthum entschlüpft, so würde er doch andrerseits beweisen, wie schwach der Glaube an die Wunderthaten seines Herrn und Meisters in ihm Wurzel gefasst hätte.

Wir haben es sonach mit einem Anfänger in der christlichen Erkenntniss zu thun und dürfen von ihm nicht viel mehr vermuthen, als was er gesagt hat. Ist es doch kaum wahrscheinlich, dass der, welcher so scharfsinnig den Zwiespalt in der Rede

*) Ausgabe S. 57.

des Cäcilius aufdeckte und sich vermass, denselben durch die seinige auszugleichen (16, 4), sich einem ganz gleichen Tadel bewussterweise ausgesetzt hätte, wenn es in seiner Macht gestanden, ihn zu vermeiden. Denn genau dasselbe: interim Deum, interim deos credere se variavit hätte ihm der Heide zurückgeben können, wäre er noch einmal zu Worte gekommen. Warum duldete Minucius diesen Widerspruch oder warum suchte er ihn nicht zu erklären? — Weil er ihn weder verschweigen wollte noch sich selbst zu erklären wusste. Zu jenem war er zu gewissenhaft, zu diesem zu unwissend. — Mit dieser Auffassung löst sich alles. So werden wir der philosophischen Seite der Apologie gerecht, so erklären sich die „Lücken“ seines Christenthums*) und so entheben wir auch unseren Apologeten dem Verdachte, ein im Grunde fremdes Glaubenssystem für das christliche, für sein eignes ausgegeben zu haben. Für diese Auffassung aber spricht schliesslich das Alterthum selbst in dem authentischsten aller Gewährsmänner über Minucius, in Lactanz: Huius liber, cui Octavius titulus est, declarat, quam idoneus veritatis assertor esse potuisset, si se totum ad id studium contulisset (inst. V. 1). —

Damit werden wir mit hoher Wahrscheinlichkeit zu der schon von Keim**) ausgesprochenen Ansicht geführt, in Minucius Felix einen Neubekehrten vor uns zu haben, der in der ersten Liebe für die neue Lehre, nach seiner Fassung, für den moralphilosophischen Monotheismus, eine Lanze bricht. In der That merkt man dem Verfasser das grosse persönliche Interesse für diese Lehre allenthalben an. Diesem einen Gotte widmet er einen ganzen Haupttheil der Rede (16, 5—20, 1), er bildet den Mittelpunkt des christlichen Glaubens und Glückes 31, 8. 38, 4. 37, 8. 36, 4, bei der Darlegung des göttlichen Wesens wird der Apologet lebhaft 18, 7 vgl. 38, 4 und nicht müde, ihn den heidnischen Gottheiten als den Wahren und Einen gegenüber zu stellen 18, 7. 19, 3. 26, 11. 27, 2. 7, kurz, ihn hält er hoch und zeigt er der Welt, als wie ein eben aufgefundenes Kleinod.

Dieses sichtliche Interesse für den Monotheismus legte uns die Vermuthung nahe, dass Minucius, nachdem er einmal durch

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*) Auch die „Citate“, die man bisher aufgefunden zu haben glaubt, zwingen nicht auf direkte Bibelbenutzung zu schliessen. Sie erklären sich viel eher als christliche loci communes.

**) Keim: „Rom und Christenthum.“ 1881. S. 472.

den sittlichen Lebenswandel der Christen von dem gewöhnlichen Vorurtheil gegen sie abgebracht worden war, grade durch diese und die damit eng verbundenen Auferstehungslehre, bei deren Ausführung seine Sprache sogar poetisch wird 34, 11, zum Christenthum bekehrt worden sei. Ansätze zum Monotheismus bot ja das Heidenthum genug dar, wie Minucius selbst angiebt. War nur einmal die negative Voraussetzung, das Bewusstsein von der inneren Haltlosigkeit des heidnischen Götterglaubens in solch' einem gebildeten Geiste vorhanden, so vermochte das Christenthum mit dieser Lehre an den hinter den Erscheinungen, ja hinter dem gesammten Götterhimmel bereits geahnten „unbekannten Gott“ anzuknüpfen. Man sieht es hier deutlich, wie sich sein gewonnener christlicher Gottesbegriff an bereits vorhandene philosophische Momente anlehnt. Es kann kein Zweifel sein, dass dem höchsten Werkmeister, dem Künstler, dem schönen Gott der platonische *δημιουργός*, *τεκταινόμενος* etc. zu Grunde liegt, welchem ja als dem Guten und Vollkommenen zugleich die Schönheit mit innewohnt*), während bei dem mit Fürsorge waltenden Regenten mehr an die stoische *πρόνοια* zu denken ist. Das eigentlich Christliche darin ist das Moment des Richters, welcher der Welt Zerstörung und den Menschen theils ewige Strafe androht, theils ewiges Leben verheisst.

Dieser innere Vorgang erklärt uns auch die minucianische Anschauung vom Christenthum als einem Fortschritt, einer Aufklärung (26, 6), einer höheren Entwickelungsstufe, zu welcher die Philosophie eine nothwendige Vorstufe war (38, 6). Was in seinem Innern vorging, vermeinte er auch in der Geschichte wiederzuerkennen. Das Christenthum erscheint ihm wesentlich als eine Zusammenfassung aller Wahrheitsmomente, die im Heidenthume nur zerstreut bereits vorhanden waren. Aus dieser Anschauung ergiebt sich auch seine wechselnde Stellung zur Philosophie. Geht er gegen den heidnischen error vor, so stellt er sich mit ihr auf gleichen Boden und kämpft mit den nämlichen Waffen der Vernunft wie diese. Vertheidigt er aber seine eigne Christenstellung, so wird er sich auch des Unterschiedes zwischen Christenthum und Philosophie bewusst. Er findet ihn freilich nur in

*) Vgl. Symp. 201 C. Tim. 30 A u. C. Aus dieser Verwandtschaft mit dem platonischen Gott erklärt sich auch das überaus günstige Urtheil über Plato 19, 14: Platoni apertior de deo . . . oratio est et quae tota esset caelestis, nisi persuasionis civilis nonnumquam admixtione sordesceret.

dem reineren Lebenswandel der Christen (35, 5) und dem Besitz der Wahrheit gegenüber einem blossen Suchen nach ihr (38, 6). Einen eigentlichen Wesensunterschied zwischen Beiden aber kennt er nicht. Christenthum wie Philosophie haben nach der Wahrheit gesucht, Beide mit dem nämlichen Organ der Vernunft, Beide auf dem nämlichen Arbeitsfelde, dem umgebenden Weltall 17, 2, im Besonderen an dem mächtigen Himmelsgewölbe *mit* seiner erhabenen Schönheit und planvollen Gesetzmässigkeit (c. 17). Das Christenthum hat die Wahrheit nur gefunden, in dem Einen, dem höchsten Werkmeister und Künstler (17, 6 und 11), der selbst schön (18, 4) diese schöne Welt gebildet, dem höchsten Regenten, der sie mit Fürsorge verwaltet, und dem ernsten Richter, der an ihrem Ende steht mit der Absicht, sie zu zerstören, alle, die von ihm nichts wissen, in ewige Pein zu stürzen, die ihn aber erkannt haben, in ihren alten Leibern wieder herzustellen zu einem neuen, glücklichen Leben (37, 7. 35, 4. 34, 10—12 vgl. 11, 1 f.).

Wir Späteren freilich sind sehr geneigt, sein wesentlich monotheistisches Christenthum zu unterschätzen. Dennoch hat schon die *Hinkehr zu* diesem als grosser Fortschritt zu gelten. Minucius ist sich desselben wohl bewusst. Das Heidenthum, aus dem er discussa caligine de tenebrarum profundo in lucem sapientiae et veritatis emergebat 1, 4, steht noch lebhaft vor seinem Geiste nebst all' den schädlichen Einflüssen, womit es durch die Erziehung, durch die Poesie, durch Kunstwerke und Cultus auf die Geister von Jugend auf einwirkte. Er selbst gesteht den gesammten Göttervorstellungen gegenüber 23, 1: Has fabulas et errores et ab inperitis parentibus discimus et, quod est gravius, ipsi studiis et disciplinis elaboramus, carminibus praecipue poetarum etc., ferner 23, 8: his atque huiusmodi figmentis et mendaciis dulcioribus corrumpuntur ingenia puerorum et isdem fabulis inhaerentibus adusque summae aetatis robur adolescunt et in isdem opinionibus miseri consenescunt etc. vgl. 23, 9. Die Leute wuchsen in diesen Vorstellungen auf, wurden darin alt. Mochte auch der Verstand sie läugnen, die Phantasie hielt daran fest. Dass selbst unser Apologet noch nicht so ganz aus heidnischem Aberglauben heraus war, dafür zeugt seine Dämonenlehre*). Man vergleiche jene anekdotenhaften Erzählungen in c. 27, besonders 27, 5 f.: haec

*) Auch schon der Umstand, dass er den heidnischen Orakeln nicht alle Wahrheit abzusprechen wagt 27. 1. 26, 7.

omnia sciunt pleraque pars vestrum ipsos daemonas de semetipsis confiteri, quotiens a nobis tormentis verborum et orationis incendiis de corporibus exiguntur. ipse Saturnus et Serapis et Juppiter et quicquid daemonum colitis, victi dolore quod sunt eloquuntur, nec utique in turpitudinem sui, nonnullis praesertim vestrum adsistentibus, mentiuntur. ipsis testibus, esse eos daemonas, credite fassis. Dazu kommt 35, 2 die minucianische Auslegung vom Schwur Juppiters, die uns abermals seine innersten Gedanken offenbart: et ideo apud eos (sc. poetas) etiam ipse rex Juppiter per torrentes ripas et atram voraginem jurat religiose: destinatam enim sibi cum suis cultoribus poenam praescius perhorrescit. Man sieht, die alten Götter leben noch, nur unter dem Namen von Dämonen. Und zwar derselbe Saturn, derselbe Juppiter, denen er c. 21 mit solcher Ausführlichkeit ihre Menschlichkeit, ihren Tod, ja ihre Grabstätte nachgewiesen hatte. Die der philosophirende Verstand aus dem Vorstellungskreis hinausgethan hat, führt der Aberglaube dahin zurück. Freilich nicht so ganz unverändert, denn das Gute an ihnen ist abgestreift und übertragen auf den neuen und einen Gott, der jetzt an ihrer Stelle den Himmel eingenommen hat. Seitdem irren sie gleichsam entthront und heimathlos umher (vagi), suchen in stetem Gegensatz gegen den neuen Gott ihre alte Macht, soweit sie ihnen geblieben ist, zu bethätigen und die Menschen zur Anerkennung ihrer Herrschaft zu zwingen (27, 1—2). Es enthält somit diese Dämonologie noch einen Ueberrest vom Polytheismus her. Sie lässt uns hineinblicken in den psychologischen Process, den ein zum Monotheismus bekehrter Heide durchmachen musste und den grade dieser bekehrte Heide noch nicht so völlig hinter sich hatte, als man anzunehmen geneigt ist. Sie lässt uns aber ebendarum auch den Fortschritt würdigen, den der Apologet zu diesem Monotheismus hin gethan zu haben glaubte.

Mochte ihn also vornehmlich dieser zum Uebertritt bestimmt haben, was bewog ihn, das Christenthum zu vertheidigen? — Wir meinen, weder der λόγος ἀληθής des Celsus, wie Keim, noch die Rede des Fronto, wie Paul de Félice schliesst (S. 37), sondern die öffentliche Meinung, das eingefleischte Vorurtheil des Publicums gegen das Christenthum, speziell jener höheren Kreise, die mit hochmüthiger Ueberlegenheit auf die un-

gebildeten Christen herabzublicken pflegten.*) Es war in der Regel ein Hauptvorwurf, womit jene Classen die Christen von vorn herein abfertigten: der Mangel an jeglicher höheren Bildung und die gänzliche Nichtberechtigung zum Philo-

*) Es liegt uns hier natürlich eine eingehendere Widerlegung fern. Indess fragen wir Keim gegenüber, warum Celsus auch nicht ein einziges Mal in der Apologie genannt oder auch nur angedeutet wird, während doch der Name Frontos sogar zweimal vorkommt. Keims Erklärung hierfür S. 156: „dass sein Name aus Schicklichkeit, da die Disputation in eine bedeutend frühere Zeit zurückverlegt wird, nicht genannt sei", kann doch unmöglich genügen. Einem Apologeten, welcher selbst den Lehrer der beiden späteren Kaiser M. Aurel und L. Verus nicht nur nennt, sondern auch so schroff beurtheilt wie 31, 2, dem trauen wir unmöglich Schicklichkeitsrücksichten zu einem Manne gegenüber, der doch dem Christenthum viel weher gethan hatte als Fronto. Andrerseits wird aus einer blossen Dialogeinkleidung zu viel Capital geschlagen. Wir haben oben dargethan, dass gerade die unsrige am wenigsten darauf Anspruch machen kann. Wir betrachten sie durchaus als Mittel zum Zweck, gleichsam als Empfehlungskarte in jene höheren Kreise, um daselbst durch ihren Inhalt zu wirken. Diese Ansicht bestätigt uns am Schlusse der Verfasser selbst. Nachdem dort Octavius seine Rede beendet hatte, spricht Minucius darüber folgendes Urtheil aus: quod ad me est, magnitudine admirationis evanui, quod ea, quae facilius est sentire quam dicere et argumentis et exemplis et lectionum auctoritatibus adornasset, et quod malevolos isdem illis quibus armantur, philosophorum telis retudisset. Wir meinen, dieser Wink ist deutlich genug. Nicht ein Einzelner wird widerlegt, sondern eine Mehrheit, nicht der harmlose Cäcilius, die lebenswahrste Person des Dialoges, sondern eine ganze Classe dem Christenthum übel gesinnter Leute, die den Christen gegenüber sich in den Philosophenmantel hüllten und ihnen jede Berechtigung dazu absprachen. Letzteres geht auch gegen Paul de Félice, der zwar innerhalb des Gegebenen bleibt, aber unseres Erachtens Peripherisches in's Centrum rückt. Fronto steht nie allein, sondern stets in Verbindung mit der Allgemeinheit vgl. 9, 6: et de convivio notum est; passim omnes loquuntur, id etiam Cirtensis nostri testatur oratio und 31, 2: sic de isto et tuus Fronto. Ferner aber ist gar nicht nachweisbar, ob diese Rede gegen die Christen gerichtet war (vgl. auch die Kritik der Étude P.s de F. von J. Neumann. Theol. Litt. Ztg. 1881. 18. S. 423). Vielmehr dient Fronto nur als Illustration der Gegenwart, speziell jener tonangebenden gebildeten Welt der römischen Hauptstadt, deren gefeierter Wortführer er war. Vgl. Teuffel S. 825, auch das Cirtensis noster des Cäcilius 9, 6, das freilich Octavius resp. Minucius vom gegnerischen Standpunkte aus auf tuus Fr. einschränkt. Ja gerade durch ihn, den Lehrer der kaiserlichen Thronfolger, erhält die Apologie zugleich eine Zweckbeziehung auf die höchsten Beamten- und Hofkreise in der nächsten Umgebung des Kaisers und somit auf den eigentlichen Herd des Heidenthums selbst. Man vergleiche dazu besonders c. 37, 7 f.: divitiis afluant (vgl. 16, 5), honoribus floreant, polleant potestatibus . . . in hoc quidam imperiis ac dominationibus eriguntur . . . ferner 9 f. die Auswahl der Beispiele: rex es . . . dives es . . . fascibus et purpuris gloriaris . . . nobilitate generosus es etc. Dazu

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sophiren. Die Widerlegung dieses Hauptvorwurfs ist unseres Erachtens Zweck der Apologie. In der That bildet ersterer die Voraussetzung für die ganze Rede des Cäcilius. Die Christen werden dort als solche angesehen, die sich anmassen in philosophischen Fragen, und zwar den schwierigsten, mitzureden: philosophari, disserere divina, de rebus caelestibus disputare, certum aliquid de summa rerum ac majestate decernere 13, 1. 12, 7. 16, 5 vgl. 19, 4. Dieses ist der erste und der letzte Vorwurf, er schliesst die Rede ein (5, 3. 12, 7—13, 1.) und fasst sich am Schluss, wie der Ring in der Perle, zusammen in jenem characteristischen Triumphwort des Cäcilius, das noch einmal den Hauptgedanken der ganzen Rede kurz heraushebt 14, 1: Ecquid ad haec audet Octavius, homo Plautinae prosapiae, ut Christianorum praecipuus, ita postremus philosophorum?! Es lässt sich begreifen, das grade dieser Vorwurf der Unbildung einen feingebildeten Mann wie Minucius auf's Empfindlichste treffen musste.

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noch 29, 5 das vorsichtige etiam principibus et regibus, non ut magnis et electis viris, sicut fas est, sed ut deis turpiter adulatio falsa blanditur.

Hiermit sind wir bereits auf chronologischem Gebiete. In der That, nach unserer Ansicht, wonach die Einkleidung des Dialoges fingirt erscheint, haben wir keinen Grund mehr gegen die Abfassung der Schrift noch zu Lebzeiten Frontos, spätestens also 175 (vgl. Teuffel S. 826). Eine nähere Bestimmung der Abfassungszeit wagen wir nicht. Sie gehört auch nicht hierher.

So erklären wir uns die Vorwürfe durchaus der öffentlichen Meinung entstammend. Sie sind ja keineswegs so eingehend, dass die Heiden, noch dazu die Gebildeten unter ihnen, erst eines wissenschaftlichen Vermittlers dazu bedurft hätten, sondern konnten von jedem Beobachter aus der Erfahrung gewonnen werden, zumal in einer Zeit, wo bereits die öffentliche Aufmerksamkeit, ja Sorge den Christen zugewandt 9, 1, andrerseits aber auch der Verkehr zwischen Heiden und Christen noch nicht abgebrochen war. Letzteres beweist ja das Ansehen des christlichen causidicus in der Kaiserstadt wie namentlich der freundschaftliche Umgang zwischen dem Heiden Cäcilius und dem Christen Minucius, welchen wir wenigstens als allgemein geschichtliches Vorkommniss nicht leugnen können. Ist es erlaubt, eine Muthmassung auszusprechen, so war es gerade ein solcher gemischter Freundeskreis, dem diese Apologie ihre Veranlassung verdankt. Hier, inmitten der heidnischen Freunde, hatte der neu Uebergetretene wohl manchen Disput zu bestehen gehabt. Eine solche Disputation hat ihm wohl die Unterlage zu seinem Dialoge abgegeben, nur wurde sie dann für das allgemeine Publicum erweitert, darin Heidenthum und Christenthum gleichsam portraitirt. Das Heidenthum ist ihm dank seiner reichen Lebenserfahrung am besten gelungen. Desgleichen der lebhafte Heide Cäcilius; möglich, dass der Zeichnung desselben das Bild eines seiner heidnischen Freunde und — Gegner mit unterlief. Den Christen Octavius aber traf er nicht. Der war er eben selbst.

Er greift ihn daher als das — für ihn — Wichtigste heraus und stellt ihn sich selbst in der ersten Rede zum Hauptwiderlegungsobject. Ihn hat er dann auch in der zweiten Rede, in welcher wir so recht eigentlich seine persönliche Ueberzeugung zu suchen haben, siegreich zurückgewiesen, und zwar nicht mit einzelnen gelegentlichen Seitenhieben wie 31, 2, sondern mit den Grundgedanken jedes der drei Haupttheile der Rede, wie sie sich zumeist*) in den Recapitulationen am Schlusse ausgesprochen finden und dort als folgende sich ergeben:

1) Auch das Christenthum ist eine Philosophie 16, 5—6. 20, 1.

2) Vielmehr im Heidenthum liegt die Unbildung (inperitia, error) 20, 2. 26, 7. 27, 8 u. ö.

3) Ja das Christenthum verdient den Vorzug vor Heidenthum und Philosophie, und zwar durch eine lebendige Sittlichkeit wie durch den alleinigen Besitz der Wahrheit 38, 6 vgl. 35, 5. Alle drei aber ergeben den einen Grund- und Hauptgedanken der Widerlegungsrede und somit der ganzen Apologie: Das Christenthum erst ist die rechte Philosophie.

Das hatte der Apologet dem Cäcilius und in ihm jenen gebildeten heidnischen Kreisen sagen wollen.

Damit aber wird der Grundgedanke zur Tendenz. Ihn und seinen Gegenpart fasste er in die Form eines philosophischen Dialoges nach dem Muster Ciceros. Ihm schickte er vor allem jene reizvolle Einleitung voraus zur schnelleren Einführung in genannte Kreise. Dieser Grundgedanke aber zeigt uns endlich auch, wie der Verfasser selbst das Christenthum aufgefasst hatte: als Philosophie.

*) Mit Ausnahme des zweiten Haupttheils, der durch den Uebergangstheil der Dämonologie zu eng an nachfolgenden letzten Haupttheil gebunden ist.

NACHWORT.

Wir glauben nicht, uns getäuscht zu haben. Je tiefer wir in die Apologie eindrangen, desto mehr stiessen wir auf heidnischen Untergrund. Das eigentlich Christliche aber, das ja unläugbar in der Apologie vorhanden ist, suche man nicht in der Auffassung christlicher Lehre als vielmehr in der Aneignung christlicher Lebensgrundsätze. Es ist der neue sittliche Geist, wodurch der Wandel der ersten Christen gegen den heidnischer Genusssucht so sichtlich abstach. Dieser mochte es gewesen sein, der in Gestalt der Standhaftigkeit und Treue den ursprünglichen Christenfeind auf die neue Sekte aufmerksam machte, ihn trieb, mit ihren Grundsätzen und Lehren sich näher bekannt zu machen und ihn endlich ganz hinüberzog in's christliche Lager, in welchem er statt bunter Götterculte den einen und den wahren Gott verehrt sah und unter ihm ein inniges, bescheidênes Zusammenleben erkannte, fern vom geräusch- und anspruchsvollen Treiben der verkommenen Heidenwelt (37, 12. 38, 4. 31, 5 f.).

Diese neue Geistesrichtung, auch in ihm selbst bemerkbar, scheidet sich deutlich von seiner heidnischen Geistesanlage. Selbst der urban gebildete Mann, wendet er sich doch mit Entrüstung gegen die schamlose urbanitas der römischen Hauptstadt 28, 10. 16, 2. Selbst mit den rhetorischen Kunstmitteln so vertraut, eifert er doch gegen die lügenhafte Rhetorik seiner Zeit, 31, 2. c. 14—15, vgl. 16, 6. Selbst endlich im Grunde noch der Alte, der Philosoph, tritt er doch den Philosophen auf solch' schroffe Weise gegenüber wie 38, 5. Dass er letzteres aber nur an einer einzigen Stelle gethan hat*), an anderen

*) Und selbst hier nicht, ohne zunächst an ganz bestimmte Philosophen, die Skeptiker, vor allem die mittlere Akademie, zu denken, und in dieser Opposition auch hier am Schluss noch seinen ursprünglich stoischen Standpunkt zu verrathen, was um so wahrscheinlicher wird durch die Vergleichung des ganz

jedoch den relativen Werth, ja Vorzug des Heidenthums anerkannte (19, 14. 35, 5), beweist, wie pietätsvoll er auf die heidnische Wissenschaft, die ihn grossgezogen hatte, zurückblickte. Dies ist für Minucius Felix charakteristisch. Schon bei dem nächsten lateinischen Apologeten, bei Tertullian, ist das anders geworden. „Was hat der Philosoph und der Christ gemein? Der Schüler Griechenlands und des Himmels? Der Bewerber um Ruhm und der um ewiges Leben? Der Wortmacher und der Thatenvollbringer? Der Zerstörer und der Erbauer der Dinge? Der Freund und der Feind des Irrthums? Der Verfälscher der Wahrheit und ihr Wiederhersteller? Ihr Dieb und ihr Wächter?" So der rauhe Afrikaner (Apol. 46). Man sieht diesen hier mit Bewusstsein die Wurzeln durchschneiden, die doch auch ihn an die heidnische Wissenschaft fesselten. Der „Octavius" aber des Minucius Felix erscheint in der That, wie schon Ebert ihn ansah (S. 386), „nicht sowohl in dem einseitigen Lichte eines Gegensatzes zu der classisch-antiken als vielmehr in dem wahreren einer Neubildung auf ihrer Grundlage."

ähnlichen Urtheils über die Philosophen aus dem Munde seines Lehrers Seneca (Exhort. apud Lactant. Inst. 3, 15): Plerique philosophorum tales sunt, diserti in convicium suum. quos si audias in avaritiam, in libidinem, in ambitionem perorantes, indicium professos putes: adeo redundant ad ipsos maledicta in publicum missa.

Druck von C. G. Naumann in Leipzig.

